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dwb

No.107 November 1992

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DWB is currently looking into the feasability of staging a two-day convention to coincide with the thirtieth anniversary of Doctor Who next year which, if it goes ahead, will be the biggest fan-run event of its kind ever. Our aim is to assemble the most diverse guest list of stars and production staff representative of all eras of the programme possible and create a two-day timetable which is both unique and a fitting tribute to three decades of the longest-running science-fiction series of all time.

We are also planning for a maximum capacity of one thousand attendees, and have already appointed several professional key personnel to oversee several areas of organisation, but we would like to hear from you if you feel you have a particular skill in convention organisation to offer. At this stage we are looking for people who are familiar with running large-scale events and who have proven track records.

If the idea comes together and we think that we can pull off the ultimate convention, then full details will be announced in DWB, and readers are invited to contribute ideas on an individual basis.

So, if you feel that you have something to offer in this field, please write to us as soon as possible ...

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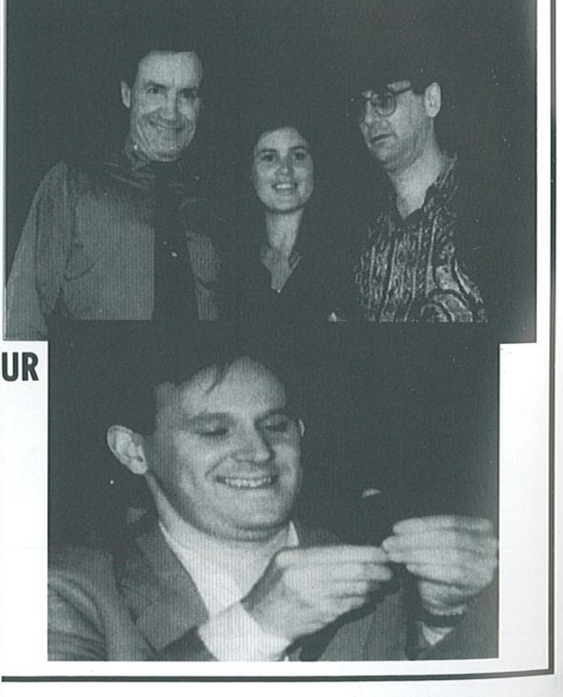

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DWB
PO Box 1015, Brighton BN2 2YU

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DOCTOR WHO may have been off the air for almost three years now, but as this issue's news pages show, there's more happening in the Who world than ever before — the Doctor Who news this issue even invades the general telefantasy pages!

The sixties theme on our cover refers to the exceptional *Doctor Who: The Sixties* book reviewed on page 23, but it could equally refer to UK Gold, the BBC and Thames joint satellite channel. It is reported that they will be running Doctor Who from the beginning, something that should be known by the time you read this.

A few errors crept into last issue. Somewhere between here and the printers a caption got swapped around, which means that, as the more observant among you will have noticed, page 12 showed a picture not of Colin Gordon but of a horse ... And the top picture on that page was from *Free For All*, as seen last week on C4.

Next issue will be a Blake's 7 special, to tie in with the conclusion of BBC Video's releases. And finally, please note that as a result of our back issues offer, issues 73 and 85 are sold out.

DAVID

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Cover: *The Aztecs* makes its long-awaited debut on BBC Video in November. DWB reviewed this classic story somewhat prematurely in issue 99 © *BBC Video;* inset: Patrick Troughton, Frazer Hines and Wendy Padbury prepare to film a scene on location for The Invasion © *Sue Willis.* See our review of *Doctor Who:The Sixties* on page 23. **Page 17:** Another stunning rendition of a Peter Davison story by Pete Wallbank. Pete can be contacted for possible commissions at 14 St Matthew's Road, Burnt Wood, Walsall, Staffordshire WS7 9DU

TO ORDER NEXT ISSUE (DWB 108, December 1992): send a crossed cheque/PO payable to DWB for £2.50 (£2.90 for card-reinforced first-class envelope) or US$5.75 to DWB 108, 5 Whitegate Gardens, Harrow-Weald, Middlesex HA3 6BW.
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And the eyes narrowed ...

PANOPTICON 92 saw the first convention appearance of John Nathan-Turner and his close friend Gary Downie for some time, and, as they soon discovered, fan feeling has shifted dramatically in the interim.

Evidently aware that (a) the reasons behind his departure from BBC Audio were now common news, (b) that the groundswell of opinion against his video 'specials' is now too great to ignore, and (c) that the imminent *DWB 106* would be unleashed over the weekend to shatter a few cosy delusions and lots more besides, it is both amazing and at the same time highly commendable that Nathan-Turner turned up at all! (It was also extremely infuriating to learn that had he not, both Christopher Bidmead and Eric Saward — who both refuse to attend the same events as their former boss — would have been featured guests!)

In an obvious attempt to deflect criticism at the earliest opportunity, a few drinks at the Leofric bar on the Friday evening prompted Gary Downie to spread the word, to anyone who was prepared to listen, that "Of course, it was Ian Levine and Gary Leigh who destroyed DOCTOR WHO by rubbing the BBC up the wrong way with their silly campaigns — don't listen to their lies about John!" When this tactic failed — this did come, after all, from the same man who later proclaimed the same weekend that "the Sylvester McCoy era was the most flawless in DOCTOR WHO's history!" — he then tried to win various fans over by offering them walk-on parts in EASTENDERS!

Meanwhile, although JNT's evil eye technique was very much in evidence — despite the effect having faded quite considerably since he lost his position of authority that used to accompany it to such an unnerving effect — John Nathan-Turner maintained a low profile while his (by now apparently desperate) friend continued with his childish antics. Indeed, Nathan-Turner appeared to be in hiding for much of the Saturday as *DWB 106* went on sale in the dealers' room and the embarrassing truth began to dawn.

Resurfacing on Sunday afternoon for his panel, it was quite telling that the DWAS had cleverly arranged a major autograph session to coincide, and so Nathan-Turner's audience was mercifully diminished in size. Even so, never has an actor in any of his productions (or any other that I can think of, come to that) ever resemembled so realistically a man about to be led to the gallows as did Nathan-Turner when he took his seat. Buckets of sweat gushed over his brow as his eyes cautiously and suspiciously narrowed each time a new question was invited from the 'vultures' in the audience, but luckily for him a disappointingly tame set of questions allowed the sweat to dry up quickly and he even began to appear relaxed and to enjoy talking about such non-controversial releases as *Shada* and *Earthshock*. Indeed, it was even agreed to extend the questioning time beyond the couple of questions planned while a particular clip from the latter video was sought to demonstrate a point to the audience.

Clearly by now lulled into a false sense of security, Nathan-Turner hastily resumed his guard when a question was raised concerning BBC Audio. He then delivered a statement he had obviously mentally prepared earlier: "Contrary to stories that are going around, I have not been sacked by BBC Audio Department in any way, shape or form. I am not available to do the next batch of releases so they've approached someone else who has done them. How he will operate the links I do not know, but I do stress to anyone here who is spreading these stories, I was most certainly not sacked." This repeats the misconception stated in the letter from Sue Anstruther (see page 3), indicating that Nathan-Turner is playing an instrumental role in trying to cover up his own folly. It has only ever been reported that he was "ousted", not "sacked", and whilst JNT seems to find it disturbingly easy to mislead the fans — as he has done on countless occasions in the past — he should instead try correcting the apparent speech defect which prevents him from naming Eric Saward as his successor on the project!

Nathan-Turner and Downie left Coventry soon after amid utterances that they will no longer be attending fan-run events after this year, and will instead be concentrating on their Teynham Productions DOCTOR WHO lecture tours. Most telling was the revelation that Nathan-Turner may be considering abandoning his various associations with DOCTOR WHO altogether following the most adverse reaction he has yet received from convention attendees, to concentrate instead on producing corporate stage shows for the BBC, for which he has been highly praised. However, despite being in the firing line for most of the weekend, he still found time to attack Jeremy Bentham for daring to make public how pleased he had been that he had managed to strike Ian Levine off the guest list for the *Tomb of the Cybermen* preview earlier this year *(DWB 101)*. It now appears that *In-Vision* will be approaching Bidmead, Saward and Levine when they soon commence documenting the 80s stories ...

Gary Leigh

Powell Goes?

ACCORDING to *The Observer* (4th October 1992), Jonathan Powell has asked that his contract as Controller of BBC1 (an "impossible job") not be renewed.

Although this has yet to be officially confirmed, previous items in *The Observer* have clearly been written by confidants of Powell, so the report is likely to prove accurate.

He is now being tipped to take over as ITV drama chief — a new position reporting to the Network Director, itself a new post for which Powell once thought of applying. The Network Director (LWT's Marcus Plantin) will assume his new post at the end of the year, and is likely to want his drama chief in place soon after, which could force Powell to leave BBC1 early if he does get the job ...

Deja Vu?

Conspiracy theorists might like to note that the BBC haven't singled out telefantasy for special (mis) treatment.

Since the BBC announced its new 24-hour news radio station, *Feedback* (Radio 4's genuinely critical equivalent to *Biteback*) has been dominated by listeners' complaints about the idea and the ensuing loss of Radio 4 on long wave. These were dismissed by a variety of BBC spokesmen who all insisted that "our research shows the demand is there".

Eventually these answers prompted a flood of letters suggesting that, while *Feedback* genuinely represented the listeners' views, it was utterly ignored by the BBC top brass. Stung by this criticism, presenter Sheena McDonald invited the Director General to respond. "Who knows? He might be able to disarm and convince you all. Except that he's declined the invitation."

Proving that some, at least, of the BBC gives a damn, she then went on to read out the address of the campaign against the loss of Radio 4 long wave. I wonder if Anne Robinson could be persuaded to plug the Save Who campaign ...?

Anthony Brown

Doctor Who goes for gold

UK GOLD, the new satellite tv channel set up by BBC Enterprises and Thames Television, launches via the Astra satellite on November 1st.

Drawing on the extensive programme libraries of both companies, one of its flagship programmes will be DOCTOR WHO — as DWB exclusively reported back in June — which will be 'stripped' every weekday at 5.30pm, with an omnibus repeat edition at 9am on Sundays. The station will be funded by advertising, and half-hour slots have therefore been allocated for DOCTOR WHO to allow for commercial breaks. At the time of going to press UK Gold have not released full transmission schedules for any programmes, but it is anticipated that they will commence transmitting all complete stories from the beginning. The company is reported to be waiting upon a final decision from BBC2 as to next year's repeat season to avoid clashes.

The UK Gold repeats will be sandwiched between NEIGHBOURS and THE DUCHESS OF DUKE STREET, and will be competing against Sky One's complete run of STAR TREK: THE NEXT GENERATION, currently being shown at 5pm with a repeat at 10pm. Although no other popular telefantasy programmes feature in the initial schedule, UK Gold do have over 130,000 episodes-worth of programmes to choose from in the future — 120,00 BBC and 10,000 Thames — and the BBC estimates that 20% of its top drama titles will have been used in peak time in the first two years of the service!

Targetted specifically at the 16-44 age-group, the service will initially be available to the 2.8 million homes now capable of receiving satellite and cable transmissions, but it is reported that UK Gold will switch to a subscription-only service from 1994, after it has had time to popularise itself. Readers who still own the original BSB dishes are advised to exercise their right to exchange them for Astra dishes, since UK Gold will not be transmitting from the Marco Polo satellite, which itself will become redundant before the end of the year.

UK Gold is an independent company in its own right, of which Thames own 15% of the equity and BBC Enterprises 20%, with Cox Enterprises Inc — the US media and communications company — underwriting the full funding requirement of the channel totalling £35 million, 65% of the holding.

Equity challenge pay rates

The largest single cost for the company will be programme transmission rights, and already a major showdown is looming between BBC Enterprises and the actors' union Equity over performers' pay, which could throw the fledgling station into industrial and legal action unless an agreement between the two sides can be reached. Equity rejected the BBC's final offer of payment to actors which was linked to the union's multi-media royalty agreement, claiming that it was not enough, but BBC Enterprises has insisted that its involvement with UK Gold will continue unabated.

In retaliation, Equity has announced that it is preparing to contest the screening of programmes from the BBC archives if necessary. A spokesman for the union recently told *The Stage and Television Today*, "The idea that the BBC and Thames can set up a new channel, pre-determine the prices of programmes they will sell to that channel, and the rates that actors will get, is unacceptable."

If Equity is successful then UK Gold's entire BBC output could be under threat.

Stallone buys 'TARDIS' prop

HOLLYWOOD film star Sylvester Stallone appears to be the latest victim of purchasing a not altogether authentic DOCTOR WHO prop at auction.

An American from Orlando bid £12,500 on Stallone's behalf at an auctioning of film and television memorabillia in early October by Wanton's Redamations of Gloucester. It is understood that the *Rambo* star was interested in the much-publicised police box — advertised as being DOCTOR WHO's original TARDIS — to use as an exhibit for his latest addition to his Planet Hollywood chain of restaurants, which is due to open in London's Piccadilly next Spring.

It materialises that the police box in question — donated by a private owner, not the BBC — is identical to that used in DOCTOR WHO from 1963 up to *The Seeds of Doom* in1976 (when it eventually collapsed on top of Tom Baker and Elizabeth Sladen), but actually hails from DIXON OF DOCK GREEN, also from the sixties! The original DOCTOR WHO "castor" version was destroyed and a new police box prop built for *The Masque of Mandragora*, which lasted through to *The Horns of Nimon*, making a brief reappearance in *Logopolis*. For *The Leisure Hive*, producer John Nathan-Turner commissioned a "collapsable" police box which could be dismantled for storage purposes, and a new version of this was built in the mid-eighties, totalling four police boxes ever built for DOCTOR WHO in all. Of the three most recent versions mark II was auctioned off by BBC Radio many years ago, Andrew Beech of the DWAS bought mark III, and mark IV currently resides in a state of limbo, anticipating the possible dawn of a new era.

While it remains to be seen whether Stallone will react in true *Rambo* fashion to the news that his TARDIS is not all that it seems, DOCTOR WHO can certainly take credit for the fact that it far outsold other notable items, such as Madonna's gold brassiere (£1000) and rubber alligators from *Indiana Jones and the Temple of Doom* at £500 apiece!

Sylvester Stallone's name was previously connected with DOCTOR WHO when he was rumoured to be a possible candidate for the role of the movie Doctor by *The Daily Express* back in 1989.

with thanks to Andrew Beech

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Marvel launches new title

ISSUE 193 of *Doctor Who Magazine* goes on sale on October 29th, with an *Android Invasion* archive, interviews with Roy Castle and Brian Hodgson of the BBC Radiophonic Workshop, the return of Controversy Corner, and a new comic strip by Dan Abnett entitled *Pureblood*, drawn by Colin Andrew.

Just a reminder that the first issue of Marvel's new 52-page full-colour WHO title, *Doctor Who Classic Comics*, follows two weeks later. Both magazines are priced at £2.50, and both feature free posters. *Classic Comics* will be launched with a special appearance of Sophie Aldred at London's Forbidden Planet on Saturday, 14th November at 12noon.

BBC Audio deny JNT was snubbed

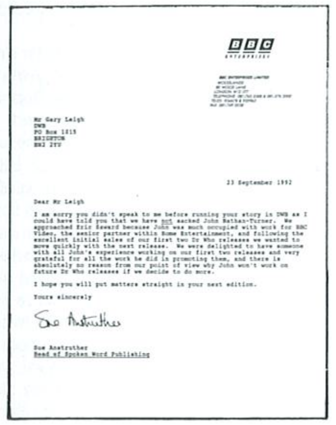
SUE ANSTRUTHER, Head of BBC Spoken Word Publishing, has denied that BBC Enterprises 'sacked' John Nathan-Turner from his capacity as editor/script-writer for the popular audio tape releases of missing DOCTOR WHO episodes.

We must stress that *DWB* has never claimed that JNT was 'sacked', merely that BBC Audio snubbed him by not asking him to continue with their next releases, *Power of the Daleks* and *Fury from the Deep*.

As the situation currently stands, the provider of the tapes that the BBC planned to use is not prepared to lend them if John Nathan-Turner is involved with the production, as Gary points out in his reply to BBC Enterprises printed here.

Copies of all correspondence received by DWB on the subject of next year's BBC Video releases have been forwarded to BBC Home Video to let them know the strength of feeling on the matter of 'specials' and incomplete stories. In reply we got the letter below, requesting that we cease publishing advance schedules (which we have always labelled as 'provisional' or 'unconfirmed') as "it only causes your readers unnecessary annoyance".

In the assumption that the majority of our readers are prepared to put up with a modicum of annoyance if it means that they are given the chance to air their feelings in advance to the BBC, DWB will, in common with several other telefantasy magazines, continue to publish provisional schedules for DOCTOR WHO video releases.



BBC ENTERPRISES

Mr Gary Leigh
DWB
PO Box 1015
BRIGHTON
BN2 2YU

23 September 1992

Dear Mr Leigh

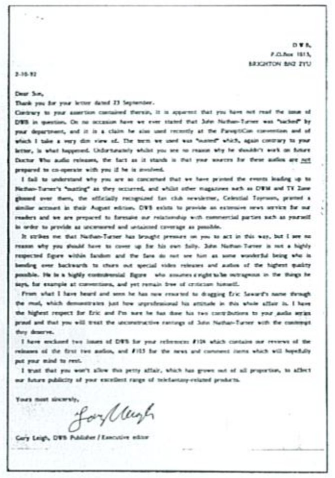
I am sorry you didn't speak to me before running your story in DWB as I could have told you that we have not sacked John Nathan-Turner. We approached Eric Saward because John was much occupied with work for BBC Video, the senior partner within Home Entertainment, and following the excellent initial sales of our first two Dr Who releases we wanted to move quickly with the next release. We were delighted to have someone with all John's experience working on our first two releases and very grateful for all the work he did in promoting them, and there is absolutely no reason from our point of view why John won't work on future Dr Who releases if we decide to do more.

I hope you will put matters straight in your next edition.

Yours sincerely

Sue Anstruther

Sue Anstruther
Head of Spoken Word Publishing



D W B,
P.O.Box 1015,
BRIGHTON BN2 2YU

2-10-92

Dear Sue,

Thank you for your letter dated 23 September.

Contrary to your assertion contained therein, it is apparent that you have not read the issue of DWB in question. On no occasion have we ever stated that John Nathan-Turner was "sacked" by your department, and it is a claim he also used recently at the PanoptiCon convention and of which I take a very dim view of. The term we used was "ousted" which, again contrary to your letter, is what happened. Unfortunately whilst you see no reason why he shouldn't work on future Doctor Who audio releases, the fact as it stands is that your sources for these audios are not prepared to co-operate with you if he is involved.

I fail to understand why you are so concerned that we have printed the events leading up to Nathan-Turner's "ousting" as they occurred, and whilst other magazines such as DWM and TV Zone glossed over them, the officially recognised fan club newsletter, Celestial Toyroom, printed a similar account in their August edition. DWB exists to provide an extensive news service for our readers and we are prepared to forsake our relationship with commercial parties such as yourself in order to provide as uncensored and untainted coverage as possible.

It strikes me that Nathan-Turner has brought pressure on you to act in this way, but I see no reason why you should have to cover up for his own folly. John Nathan-Turner is not a highly respected figure within fandom and the fans do not see him as some wonderful being who is bending over backwards to churn out special video releases and audios of the highest quality possible. He is a highly controversial figure who assumes a right to be outrageous in the things he says, for example at conventions, and yet remain free of criticism himself.

From what I have heard and seen he has now resorted to dragging Eric Saward's name through the mud, which demonstrates just how unprofessional his attitude in this whole affair is. I have the highest respect for Eric and I'm sure he has done his two contributions to your audio series proud and that you will treat the unconstructive rantings of John Nathan-Turner with the contempt they deserve.

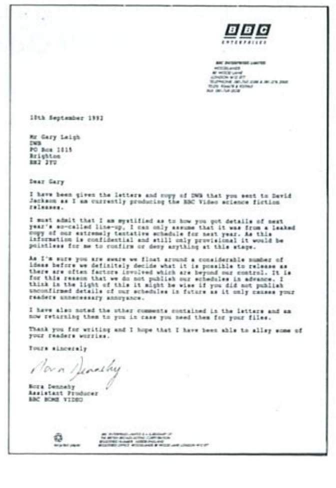
I have enclosed two issues of DWB for your reference: #104 which contains our reviews of the releases of the first two audios, and #103 for the news and comment items which will hopefully put your mind to rest.

I trust that you won't allow this petty affair, which has grown out of all proportion, to affect our future publicity of your excellent range of telefantasy-related products.

Yours most sincerely,

Gary Leigh

Gary Leigh, DWB Publisher / Executive editor



BBC ENTERPRISES

10th September 1992

Mr Gary Leigh
DWB
PO Box 1015
Brighton
BN2 2YU

Dear Gary

I have been given the letters and copy of DWB that you sent to David Jackson as I am currently producing the BBC Video science fiction releases.

I must admit that I am mystified as to how you got details of next year's so-called line-up. I can only assume that it was from a leaked copy of our extremely tentative schedule for next year. As this information is confidential and still only provisional it would be pointless for me to confirm or deny anything at this stage.

As I'm sure you are aware we float around a considerable number of ideas before we definitely decide what it is possible to release as there are often factors involved which are beyond our control. It is for this reason that we do not publish our schedules in advance. I think in the light of this it might be wise if you did not publish unconfirmed details of our schedules in future as it only causes your readers unnecessary annoyance.

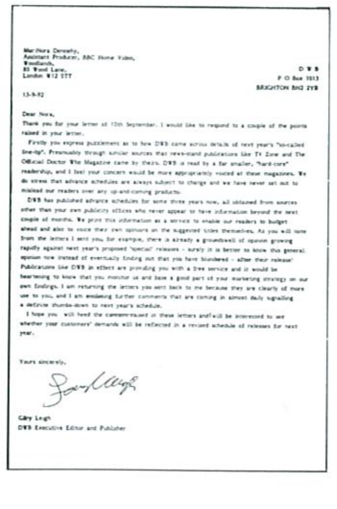
I have also noted the other comments contained in the letters and am now returning them to you in case you need them for your files.

Thank you for writing and I hope that I have been able to allay some of your readers worries.

Yours sincerely

Nora Dennehy

Nora Dennehy
Assistant Producer
BBC HOME VIDEO



Ms. Nora Dennehy,
Assistant Producer, BBC Home Video,
Woodlands,
80 Wood Lane,
London W12 0TT

D W B
P O Box 1015
BRIGHTON BN2 2YU

13-9-92

Dear Nora,

Thank you for your letter of 10th September. I would like to respond to a couple of the points raised in your letter.

Firstly you express puzzlement as to how DWB came across details of next year's "so-called line-up". Presumably through similar sources that news-stand publications like TV Zone and The Official Doctor Who Magazine came by theirs. DWB is read by a far smaller, "hard-core" readership, and I feel your concern would be more appropriately voiced at these magazines. We do stress that advance schedules are always subject to change and we have never set out to mislead our readers over any up-and-coming products.

DWB has published advance schedules for some three years now, all obtained from sources other than your own publicity offices who never appear to have information beyond the next couple of months. We print this information as a service to enable our readers to budget ahead and also to voice their own opinions on the suggested titles themselves. As you will note from the letters I sent you, for example, there is already a groundswell of opinion growing rapidly against next year's proposed 'special' releases - surely it is better to know this general opinion now instead of eventually finding out that you have blundered - after their release! Publications like DWB in effect are providing you with a free service and it would be heartening to know that you monitor us and base a good part of your marketing strategy on our own findings. I am returning the letters you sent back to me because they are clearly of more use to you, and I am enclosing further comments that are coming in almost daily signalling a definite thumbs-down to next year's schedule.

I hope you will heed the comments raised in these letters and will be interested to see whether your customers' demands will be reflected in a revised schedule of releases for next year.

Yours sincerely,

Gary Leigh

Gary Leigh
DWB Executive Editor and Publisher

Colour restoration continues apace

The Terror of the Autons has officially been restored to colour with "outstanding results", according to Ian Levine from whose print the colour signal was taken. To consolidate its success the NFT will show all four episodes of this 1971 Jon Pertwee classic, which introduced Roger Delgado as the Master, on December 15th. Call (071) 928 3232 for further details from November.

As you read this, all seven episodes of *Doctor Who andthe Silurians* should also be completely restored to colour, with work now due to commence on fixing faults on the existing *Ambassadors of Death* colour print, particularly in episodes three and four which often streak and strobe.

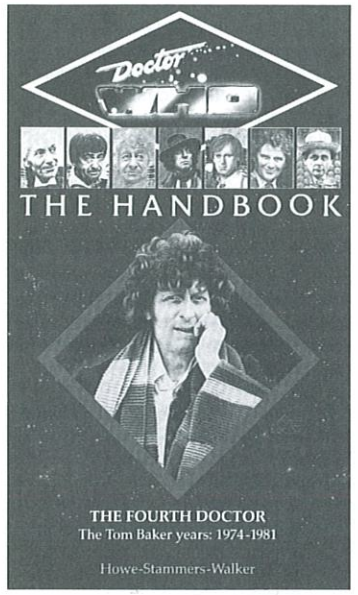
Drinks all round!

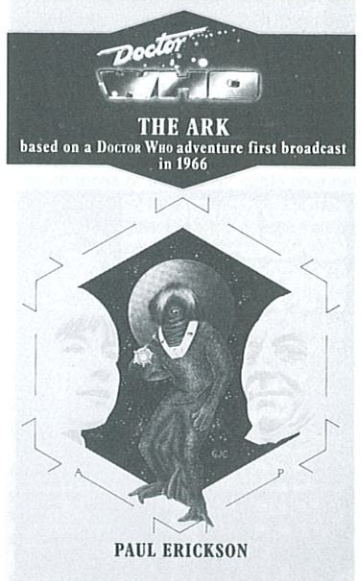
'THE LUSTLEIGH POTTERY' in Devon has announced a complete schedule for their range of highly-acclaimed DOCTOR WHO tankards to mark the show's 30th anniversary. The first Doctor is already available via the advertisement this issue, and further additions will be as follows:

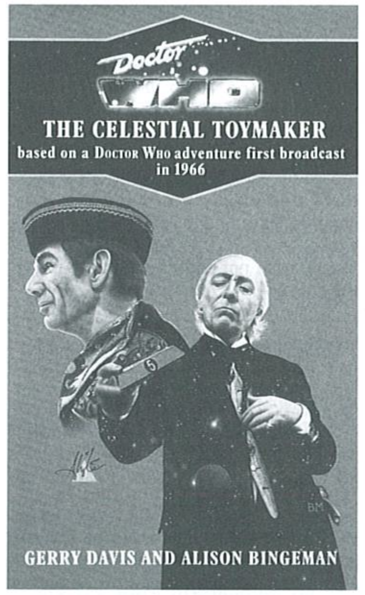
Doctor no. 2: December 1992
Doctor no. 3: March 1993
Doctor no. 4: June 1993
Doctor no. 5: September 1993
Doctor no. 6: December 1993
Doctor no. 7: March 1994

These impressive caricatures are limited to 750 of each Doctor and are individually numbered and accompanied by a certicate of ownership. A free BBC video will also be included with the sixth model as a bonus for those who collect the complete set, featuring the latest DOCTOR WHO title at the time of dispatch.

The tankards were designed by a highly-skilled sculptor working from photographs and videos. He spent several days fashioning by hand the first model (see advert) from which an eight-piece mould was produced (a standard teapot, by comparison, uses a two-piece mold). Liquid clay is then poured into the mould, and after a couple of hours the mould is carefully removed exposing the ceramic clay figure. After being kiln-fired to 1040°C, it is meticulously hand-painted by skilled artists and kiln-fired once more at 700°C, before being dipped in transparent glaze and fired at 1060°C to complete the process.




Doctor Who
THE ARK
based on a DOCTOR WHO adventure first broadcast in 1966
PAUL ERICKSON


Doctor Who
THE CELESTIAL TOYMAKER
based on a DOCTOR WHO adventure first broadcast in 1966
GERRY DAVIS AND ALISON BINGEMAN

New Adventures, graphic novels and reprints for 93

DECEMBER 3rd sees the release of *Transit*, a New Adventure by Ben Aaronovitch, and *The Fourth Doctor Handbook* by *The Sixties* authors Howe-Stammers-Walker, both of which are reviewed next issue, plus reprints of *The Ark* and *The Celestial Toymaker*.

Publication dates have been announced following confirmation of the forthcoming New Adventures.

1993

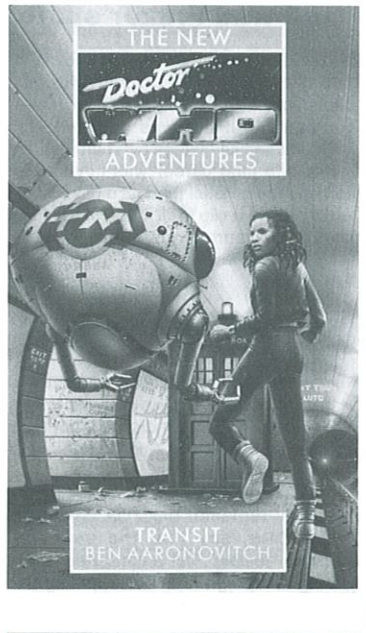
June: *White Darkness* by David McKinty
July: *Shadowmind* by Chris Bullis
Aug: *Birthrite* by Nigel Robinson
Sept: *Iceberg* by David Banks
(the next five titles will form the "Alternative Universe Cycle")
Oct: *Bloodheat* by Jim Mortimer
Nov: *The Dimension Riders* by Daniel Blythe
Dec: *The Left-Handed Hummingbird* by Kate Orman

1994

Jan: *Conundrum* by Steve Lyons
Feb: *Anarchy in the UK* by Paul Cornell

Eric Saward has suggested to Peter Darvill-Evans the possibility of a joint venture between Virgin and Marvel, to release a graphic novel in celebration of 30 years of DOCTOR WHO, which he is keen to write.

A graphic novel of *Doctor Who Magazine*'s comic strip *The Mark of Mandragora* will be published by Virgin in April, together with new-cover reprints of *Meglos* and *The Face of Evil*. *Enemy of the World* and *Carnival of Monsters* (May) and *The Time Warrior* and *The Keeper of Traken* (June) will continue the two-a-month reprint cycle which is intended to eventually update and revamp the entire range of novelisations.



Released this month (November): Jean-Marc Lofficier's *The Universal Databank* and reprints of *The Savages* and *The War Machines*.

No sign of Power

BBC ARCHIVES' investigation into a claim that *The Power of the Daleks* might exist in Ghana *(see DWB 105)* has been abruptly halted. Although evidence has emerged to the effect that the story was broadcast there six years ago, Adam Lee of the archive unit was recently informed that Ghana television's film library was completely destroyed by a fire in 1989.

The BFI's National Film Archive has launched a major search which it hopes will lead to the retrieval of lost British films from the past 80 years. Archives from other film-making countries are also being combed, and it is anticipated that a few lost tv treasures from the 50s and 60s could be unearthed along the way.

Pertwee on the mend

Jon Pertwee is said to be recovering well from a flu-like virus following a gruelling work schedule, which included recording an episode of the BBC's recent VIRTUAL MURDER series and an appearance in the new Carry On film, *Carry On Columbus* (currently on general release).

Radio Shada

The recent *Shada* revival has suddenly put Cambridge on the map! Radio Cambridge is having a DOCTOR WHO week in mid-November on the Mandy Morton Show, and Forbidden Planet opened its doors to the town on 3rd October. For the fullest possible range of science fiction merchandise available, they can be located at 60 Burleigh Street.

Dapol are Bump-and-Go

Toy and model manufacturer Dapol is set to release a limited run of 2,500 gold-coloured Louis Marx Bump-and-Go Daleks at the end of October. No further Dapol figures are planned this year, although the rumoured 12" Sylvester McCoy and Bonnie Langford dolls look likely to become a reality for 1993 …

Going for a song …

Archangel Media, new rivals to the Mythmaker range of DOCTOR WHO-related videos, have released *Under the Hammer*, a thirty-minute tape covering the 1991 Bonhams auction, in addition to *Reverse the Polarity* reviewed last issue. For further details, write to: Archangel Media, PO Box 1111, Edinburgh EH7 5JW.

BBC 'lose' £20 million

The BBC have made another blunder — to the tune of £20 million — following a mistake by the accountants! A budget intended for both BBC1 and BBC2 was assigned twice, once to each channel. Director General Michael Checkland has ordered department heads to trim their budgets in an effort to absorb the cost. The BBC also recently announched a further 1,250 job cuts.

Dæmons finally arrives

The Dæmons scriptbook has been rescheduled for November 5th following the delay of *The Masters of Luxor*. Titan Books are hoping to bring forward the *Power of the Daleks* scriptbook from next spring to avoid clashing with the release of both the novelisation and the audio around the same time.

In Memory Alone

Filming has commenced on the third of the 'Stranger and Miss Brown' sci-fi videos starring Colin Baker and Nicola Bryant. Titled *In Memory Alone*, it's based on an Audio-Visuals play by Nicholas Briggs. Anyone with an interest in props and set-building who would like to contribute their talents to this production should write to: Roger Clark, 161 Dangerfield Lane, Darlaston, Wednesbury WS10 7RU.

Wolves wander

The Wolves of Fenric, Wolverhampton's DOCTOR WHO local group which meets on the third Saturday of every month, have changed venues. For more details write to Roger Clark at the address above.

Earthshock outsells Baker Years

Video Backlash Begins

PRESSURE on BBC Video to abandon its ill-fated schedule of special releases for 1993 has been spurred on by the performance of their two most recent WHO tapes, *Earthshock* and *Tom Baker Years.*

The former debuted in the official Gallup chart at number three, and held its position within the top thirty for a further two weeks, falling to 13 and 30 respectively, while the latter made a brief appearance at number eight and plummetted out of the chart altogether — akin to the poor performance of its predecessor *The Pertwee Years* earlier this year.

Letters to *DWB* have, in the main, praised the content of the *Tom Baker Years* tape, many citing it as one of the best 'special' tapes to date, but almost all have been heavily critical of its price — £19.99, or £21.99 in some chains.

DWB is not alone in being deluged with complaints from readers about next year's planned *Davison*, *Colin Baker* and *McCoy Years* and "patchwork" releases; *TV Zone*, *DWM* and DWAS have been similarly swamped with unanimous condemnation of the list, and readers of all magazines are strongly advised to write directly to David Jackson and Penny Mills at BBC Video (BBC Enterprises, Woodlands, 80 Wood Lane, London W12 0TT) to voice their complaints and to register whether or not you will be purchasing these tapes.

It has been reported that John Nathan-Turner — who produces the special releases — is keenly supported and highly praised by Penny Mills, and that he receives a royalty from sales of the tapes rather than a one-off payment.

Next year sees the release of at least eight 'special' tapes (ie. not simply complete stories) — many of them double-packs. Work is already apace on these releases which — judging by the way the tide is turning — BBC Video may ultimately find few takers for, as the fans start to vote with their pockets...

- It has been revealed that this year's release of *The Tomb of the Cybermen* was classed by BBC Video as a special, due to the nature of its rush-release and the inserted Morris Barry introduction. Its record-breaking performance appears to have perversely prompted the subsequent flurry of specials which, with the exception of *Shada* and the *Dalek Early Years*, have not performed on a par with the conventional releases.

Star Trek: the Next Generation season six

SEVERAL more titles have been added beyond *Q-Me*, which is due to air in the US the week of October 26th. They are *Rascals* (November 2), *A Fistful of Datas* (November 9) and the Jonathan Frakes-directed *The Quality of Life* (November 16).

Rascals has been directed by Adam Nimoy, son of Leonard, and features Michelle Forbes as Ensign Ro, so far her only scheduled appearance in the season, which some are already interpreting as punishment for snubbing DEEP SPACE NINE. The episode sees several of the crewmembers beaming up to the Enterprise — and reforming as children!

A Fistful of Datas depicts a holodeck fantasy with Troi, Worf and Alexander playing at cowboys.

- NEXT GENERATION stalwarts Marvin Rush and Robert Legato — director of photography and visual effects supervisor respectively — have left the series to work on DEEP SPACE NINE.
- Patrick Stewart is still trying to reach compromise with Paramount to enable him to stay on ST:TNG for a seventh season but still have some time to do other things. Nothing has yet been agreed.
- Levar Burton (Geordi) was married on October 3rd, with Brent Spiner (Data) as his best man.
- The pilot for DEEP SPACE NINE was completed over time and over budget, but that is all that can be gleaned from what was described as an extremely closed set. Very little is coming out, but just enough for BABYLON 5 producer J Michael Stracznski to accuse DEEP SPACE NINE of stealing his show's make-up and alien designs. With BABYLON 5 now scheduled to premiere in February — one month after DEEP SPACE NINE — Stracznski's frequent accusations of plagiarism are increasingly being dismissed as sour grapes on his part.
- Jeanette Dillard, author of many of the Pocket Books series of TREK novels, is novelising the pilot of DEEP SPACE NINE.
- Attentive readers may have noticed that between here and the printers (a favourite *DWB* phrase that!) last issue's DEEP SPACE NINE cast photo got reversed, and that as a result the cast list should have read "from right to left"!

'Who-Toon' gains impetus

'NELVANA', a Toronto-based animation company, has been linked to the proposed animated version of DOCTOR WHO. *Comics Scene* magazine in America listed Nelvana as a possible contender for the animated series in the "Comics Reporter" section of its August and October issues. However, a Nelvana publicity spokeswoman insisted that there is "nothing concrete in development" with regard to a DOCTOR WHO cartoon, and that "it's so far away, we can't even say it's a future project". She concluded by saying, "There's nothing specific — it's one of hundreds of ideas we have under consideration".

Nelvana has produced such animated tv series as BARBAR and BEETLEJUICE, as well as the feature film *The Care Bears Movie.* Currently the company is working on *American Tail* for CBS; *Eek The Cat* and *Dog City* for Fox's Children's Network; and *Nate The Great* for the HBO cable network.

John Hall

Who computer game

ALTERNATIVE SOFTWARE launches the first release on its new mid-price Admiral label on November 29th called Dalek Attack, a home-computer game featuring the Doctor and the Daleks, retailing at £16.99 for 16-bit and £7.99 for 8-bit. The adventure features Davros attempting to destroy Earth's ozone layer, and the player has to overcome major obstacles created for the Doctor in his mission to defeat his arch-enemy and armies of Daleks, Ogrons and Robomen. It will be available on most computer formats, including IBM PC.

That was Frazer's Life

Frazer Hines was the featured subject of THIS IS YOUR LIFE on October 14th (not September 30th as stated in *DWB 106* — apologies, but this was due to a last minute schedule change by Thames).

Frazer's long career was covered in perhaps more detail than he'd have liked, and included a clip from *The Tomb of the Cybermen* and a recorded message from Debbie Watling and Dalek friend ...

SCALE MODELS INTERNATIONAL
AN ARGUS SPECIALIST PUBLICATION
NOVEMBER 1992 £1.80
THE WORLD LEADER ON THE SCALE MODELLING SCENE
YOUR No1
DAWN OF THE DALEKS!
Comet's 1:8 scale kit reviewed
HURRICANE KIT SURVEY
(A mega round-up begins!
THE CADILLAC MOTORCYCLES
Harley's Electra Glide from Revell
62nd MODEL ENGINEER AND MODELLING EXHIBITION OLYMPIA LONDON

The latest issue of *Scale Models International*, available from WH Smith, has a cover feature on the new Comet Miniatures range of 1:8 scale plastic injection Dalek kits written by BBC visual effects designer Mat Irvine.

events

Media Arts is staging a screening of THE PRISONER at the Town Hall Studios in Swindon on December 3rd, with a guest speaker to be announced. Call the box office on (0793) 611181 for details.

Action 93 is a weekend of celebration of ITC entertainment to be held at Shepperton Moat House over the weekend of 26-27 March 1993. For more details send an SAE to: Claire Saunders, 12 Saville Crescent, Ashford, Middlesex TW15 1SX.

The preceeding weekend, 20-21 March, sees **Helix 93**, a DOCTOR WHO convention in aid of Children in Need, at the Royal National Hotel, Russell Square, London. Adults £30, children £20 for two-days, other rates, including family, on request. For details send an SAE to: Helix 93, 48 Lensbury Way, Thamesmead, London SE2 9SZ.

Full advance convention listing next month.

PBS Doctor Who decline continues

NEW JERSEY NETWORK, now generally regarded as the largest PBS supporter of DOCTOR WHO, has relegated DOCTOR WHO to a 5pm slot, from the 9pm slot it occupied on Saturday evenings since first airing the series in January 1984. The station cites substantial demand from the under-12s for the move, but hardcore devotees see it as yet another sign of the series's demotion through dwindling popularity caused by the lack of new episodes.

The new timeslot, which commenced on September 5th, coincided with the start of a Dalek season followed by a Cyberman package, devoid of *Tomb* which NJN says it can't afford at present, in contrast to many stations — including Maryland Public Television, WMMT in New York, WFYI in Indiana, WMFE in Orlando and KTEH in San Jose — who have now shown it.

Philadelphia PBS station WITF, which recently replaced DOCTOR WHO with SURVIVORS, say that the series is currently "resting", but a concerted letter-writing campaign is in force asking the station to reinstate the programme immediately.

Finally, WLIW, the Long Island PBS station, will also not be showing DOCTOR WHO in the foreseeable future, blaming lack of funding and declining viewers.

with thanks to the Prydonian Renegades

What the Papers Say

The News of the World featured an inteview with Peter Davison on September 6th, in which the former Doctor blamed DOCTOR WHO for stifling his career. "I'm sure I've lost work because I once played Doctor Who," he said. "It was a great role, but afterwards a lot of people continued to think of me as just the Time Lord. That sort of part can limit you so much." Peter recalled that he left the role for fear of being typecast, "but it still happens — and things are likely to get worse soon because the BBC are about to release new videos with me as the Doctor. It will bring it right back into people's minds again. Much as playing Doctor Who brought me stardom of my own, it had the drawback that people still remember me as him — whereas I want to break away and do a lot of other things."

Meanwhile, the *Daily Mail* of August 22nd featured a lengthy article by Marcus Berkmann lamenting the absence of decent science-fiction and going to great lengths to attack certain fondly-held series currently on video, singling out DOCTOR WHO — "it doesn't work as drama, it doesn't work as comedy, it doesn't even work as science fiction — it only works as nostalgia, and you tire of that very quickly." He went on to caricature WHO fans as "greasy hair, dirty trainers and huge 'I love the Daleks' badges", whilst singing the praises of SPACE 1999 and (interestingly) STAR COPS. There's nowt so queer as media folk.

Finally, *The Stage* concluded its review of the BBC Video of *Shada*, by pointing out that "while BBC Video may be happy to milk the DOCTOR WHO archives for all they are worth, it still appears curiously reluctant to channel off the profits into new WHO adventures. So much for licence fee-payers' rights!"

Prepare to jaunt!

Pictured here are the new cast members for the 90s version of Roger Price's cult children's sci-fi series THE TOMORROW PEOPLE. From left to right: Adam (Kristian Schmid), Megabyte (Christian Tessier), Lisa (Kristen Ariza), and Kevin (Adam Pearce). And if you think that they couldn't have chose more confusing characters and actors ... you'd be right!

The new series begins a five-episode run on Wednesday 18th November, in a regular timeslot of 4.40-5.10pm.

The plot revolves around a mysterious ancient spaceship on the remote island of Tapahini which contains amazing powers. Co-produced by Thames and Nickleodeon, and made by Tetra films, it is written by Roger Price and directed by Ron Oliver. Another link to the original series is the return of Col. Masters, this time played by Manning Redwood.

picture © Thames Television

Highlander tv series

Further to last month's *Highlander* news, the tv series takes place prior to the first *Highlander* movie and totally ignores the mythology created by the second *Highlander* film.

The third movie in the series is also rumoured to be a *Highlander* prequel, returning the movie series to its more successful roots. The series will follow the adventures of Duncan through various time periods in (mainly) American history — the title sequence includes shots obviously from an American Civil War episode, due later in the season.

The character of Duncan MacLeod is from two generations after Connor, the Lambert character. Music from the first film by Queen is mixed into the series pilot, furthering the feeling of continuity between series and the original movie concept.

The return of Jacqueline

Jacqueline Pearce is reported to have filmed an episode of *The Young Indiana Jones Chronicles.*

PG
BBC
RED DWARF IV
byte two
DIMENSION JUMP
GRANT NAYLOR
WHITE HOLE • DIMENSION JUMP • MELTDOWN
The space continuum continues continuuming...

The second tape completing BBC Video's release of RED DWARF season four — *Dimension Jump* — is out on November 2nd, price £10.99,

SF Channel under threat

The chances of the US SF cable channel surviving have taken a knock as many cable networks across the States refuse to take the service.

Many networks are running at full capacity and refuse to ditch profitable shopping channels for the fledgling SF channel, and those with spare capacity are taking other new services, such as Ted Turner's Cartoon Channel. Toy advertisers are heavily investing in this channel, giving it a much higher profile.

Critics of the SF Channel have also condemned the station's weak programming — the main criticism being the constant repeats of the same shows spreading the material too thinly.

It's also felt that no quality control is being applied, with poor shows thrown in alongside true classics, simply because they all come under the category 'SF'. Watch this space ...

New SF shows from Fox

Unconfirmed reports suggest that Fox TV — Rupert Murdoch's attempt to create a new national tv network in the US — is considering more SF productions.

In the works may be a pilot show based on the *Circuit Trilogy* novels by Melinda Snodgrass (writer of ST:TNG's *The Measure of a Man* and script-editor for a while).

In addition, Joe Manowski and Brannon Braga, also NEXT GENERATION contributors, are reported to have a commitment from Fox for six episodes of an SF series to be called REAL TIME.

The most intriguing report, however, is that Fox are rumoured to be considering reviving ALIEN NATION. The series has a strong cult following, and episodes are currently running on Sky One in the UK (Fridays, 8pm).

The American SF Channel is reportedly discussing a revival with Fox. This may take the form of a new series, probably kicked off by a feature-length movie which would tie up the remaining loose ends from the final episode.

Rob Grant, Doug Naylor, Hattie Hayridge and Chris Barrie are tentatively scheduled to appear at London's Forbidden Planet on October 29th to sign copies of Titan's new *Red Dwarf Companion.* Call 071-379-6042 for details.

Quantum Leap delayed but still go

BBC2 have rescheduled QUANTUM LEAP to commence on November 3rd with the rest of the third season and are currently acquiring the rights to continue straight on with season four.

We are aware that many readers were disappointed to see that it had not returned on October 6th as reported last issue. Unfortunately BBC2 has a tendency to alter their schedules frequently and quite often very near to transmission, and the information with which we were provided (a BBC press release) was correct at the time of going to press.

- Several episodes of QUANTUM LEAP in the US were pre-empted during October by the Presidential debates between Clinton, Bush and Perot. The decision to screen the debates nationwide was taken by NBC, depriving affiliated stations of a QL episode.

This resulted in the much-touted two-hour season premiere finishing only 52nd of 98 shows that week, and was the lowest-rated show on its day of transmission.

On the positive side, the show won an award from the animal rights group Genesis for the episode *The Wrong Stuff.* Also there are rumours that Tom Selleck may be changing his mind about having Sam leap into his body ...

LADY PENELOPE'S pink Rolls Royce FAB 1 has joined the fleet of star vehicles at the Motor Show at the NEC near Birmingham. It can be seen inside the *Daily Mail* Pavilion until November 1st, so you'd better be quick.

Remembrance — issue two.

An A5 cult tv fanzine: Doctor Who (fan fiction), Star Trek, The Prisoner. Send £1 coinage and an A5 SAE to: Robert Bradley, 23 Lee Lane, Langley, Heanor, Derbyshire DE75 7HN.

Blade Runner II?

A second *Blade Runner* film is becoming an ever more serious possibility, with Gerard Depardieu (currently in Ridley Scott's *1492*) tipped to star.

Alien 4 Predator 3

The fourth *Alien* film is rumoured to be set to combine with *Predator 3* in the long-awaited Aliens v Predator movie, according to studio sources.

Jurassic set-back

The sets for Steven Spielberg's new £35m SF film *Jurassic Park* — about scientists bringing dinosaurs to life — were wrecked following the recent hurricance which hit the Hawaiian island of Kauai. The film set was the most expensive ever, and included a prehistoric tropical rainforest, a theme park and a monorail system.

Titan merge

Titan Distributors, Britain's largest distributor of telefantasy-related merchandise, are preparing to merge with American distributor Diamond Comics.

Not your average trilogy

Mostly Harmless, the fifth volume in Douglas Adams' increasingly inaccurately named *Hitch-Hikers Guide to the Galaxy* trilogy, is published by Heinemann in hardback at £12.99 for 219 pages.

Thunderbirds plate

The Hamilton Collection have produced a 9" plate of THUNDERBIRDS painted by Steve Kyte, a well-known artists of all Gerry Anderson material. It is only available by mail order and adverts have appeared in various magazines. Limited to 19,500 and priced at £27.95, details are available from Hamilton Collection, Freepost, WR59, Worcester WR1 1BR.

Thunderbirds puppets

Pelham have produced exclusively to Toys R Us five hand-scuplted puppets of Scott, Virgil, Parker, Jeff and Lady Penelope. These are all hand-painted and limited to 20,000 pieces at £25 each. A STINGRAY selection will follow in the new year.

Below are the THUNDERBIRDS board game and an ingenious flat-pack Thunderbird 1 that reverses to become Thunderbird 2. Oh, to be seven again ...

BBC VIDEO released in November

BBC
THE AZTECS
DOCTOR WHO
U
Starring WILLIAM HARTNELL

Ian Levine should be Doctor Who's "guardian"

J P Hooksmith
London

I was very impressed by *DWB 106*, easily amongst the finest to date. The improvement in visual style and written content since #100 has been enormous, and I look forward to its publication each month more eagerly than ever before.

I would like to comment on a few things if I may. Firstly, the editorial by David. I think it is unwise to suggest that DOCTOR WHO fans should not succumb to retrospective reappraisal, particularly in today's fandom where previously unimaginable treasures can be obtained from WH Smiths for eleven quid, or even viewed on BBC2 (ELDORADO permitting). Until recently, I was quite keen on *Warriors of the Deep*, but once I had the opportunity to watch its originator, *The Sea Devils*, I realised what a poor sequel it actually is. And there are many other such cases. Quite often in the early eighties, I believe stories were praised far above their true worth for the simple fact that they were all that was available at that particular time. Once the video market began to grow, there was a noticable turn against the series in its current regime, because it was no longer the only material on offer. By the late eighties, and at a point where most 'die hard' fans could claim to have most of the available episodes on video, the new stuff just didn't seem to compare. So I would challenge the assumption that DOCTOR WHO was at its strongest in the early eighties as David suggested. Fandom owed its strength at that time to the legion of viewers brought up on Jon Pertwee and Tom Baker. DOCTOR WHO matured along with its fans, and after Tom Baker departed, it was never quite the same again.

One reassessment I have recently made concerns the standing, and worth, of Ian Levine in DOCTOR WHO fandom. I had always considered Ian something of a pain, an ego that occasionally ranted through the pages of *DWB* or on one television programme or another. Letters such as the lead in #97, wherein Ian condemned a well written and thoughtful article about the future of DOCTOR WHO by Tim Munro by basically shouting the issue down and inciting other fans into some kind of religious frenzy led me to ask the question "Just what gives him the right?". But after *DWB*'s fascinating missing episode article, and now the interview with Ian and Eric Saward, I feel I owe Ian an apology, and also a great debt of thanks. Were it not for him, we may have lost even more treasures from DOCTOR WHO's great history, and as the recent interview shows, been more embarrased by the continual decline in quality in the eighties version. I am glad Ian consented to give an interview to *DWB*, as it has finally shown how badly he was treated by John Nathan-Turner, and how much fandom owes him for his hard work in trying to maintain at least a thread of quality and continuity in the programme during some of its darkest hours. I hope Ian feels that my thanks, and those of hopefully everyone who read the interview, make up for his lack of any official credit for his hard work. Ian, I have far more respect for you than I ever will for a certain Mr John Nathan-Turner.

What the interview with Ian Levine and Eric Saward did bring home to me is how unfair it is that John Nathan-Turner still holds the reigns of power in regard to DOCTOR WHO, if only on the video production side. I think the series is in real need of a Gene Roddenberry figure to oversee it. Someone who really understands the concept of the programme, and would not let it be tarnished by the release of inferior products or by careless errors. JNT obviously fancies himself as the protector of DOCTOR WHO, but I think we should be looking at someone like Ian Levine or perhaps Jeremy Bentham, to become its 'guardian'. Let's make a real effort to rid ourselves of JNT, and replace him with someone who genuinely cares. I've written my letters to BBC Video, let's hope we can persuade them to act at last.

SHEER GREED!

Julian Smith
Wincobank, Sheffield

I have just watched nearly three hours of entertaining DOCTOR WHO. *The Tom Baker Years* special is an absolute joy to watch. The format is perfect; clips from Mr Baker's era, followed by comments and recollections of the story (or should I say lack of recollections in some cases!). For once BBC Video have come up with the goods regarding years tapes. The clips are just the right lengths, Tom Baker's comments are witty, informative and go some way to showing the personality of the well-loved fourth Doctor.

However, all the other so called specials were utter trash, the only one close to the mark was the Dalek one. I do not want to see odd episodes linked together with bits of narrative twaddle. They left me wanting to see the rest of the story, when we all know full well that someone's 'auntie' savagely deleted the remainder. The Tom Baker tape left me with a sort of glow — a stunning piece of documentary.

Now the gripe! Why on earth was it on two tapes??? It would have easily gone onto a 3 hour tape. There was no need for a 'Part 1' and 'Part 2'. I did not watch it all in one sitting, I doubt if many others did, but two tapes, come on now chaps!

The second gripe is the price. £19.99 was too steep. What justified the price? There were no expensive sets involved, no special effects, so what did we get? Tom Baker in a set from one of those BBC2 costume dramas, one camera man, a television, and a video. The only other thing was a researcher to pick the clips, and a VT editor to splice it all together. It's about time that BBC Enterprises got rid of the 'two tapes, double the price' attitude. Why could it not have been £12.99 like *The Tomb of the Cybermen*? Sheer greed!

John Hudson
Gateshead, Tyne & Wear

With your news that John Nathan-Turner has been sacked from BBC Audio and another batch of letters criticising his decisions, it looks as if people are at last beginning to realise that he was the main culprit in the murder of DOCTOR WHO. I'm sure there's a danger of overdoing the JNT bashing, but I cannot help voicing my astonishment that he would choose to release such utter trash as *Silver Nemesis* on video ahead of really good stories he produced himself — *Vengeance on Varos*, to name just one. I only hope they come to their senses before January.

BBC Enterprises themselves must be condemned for continuing to rip off the customer by releasing incomplete stories ahead of complete ones. I am inclined to side with the cynics who predict a re-release when the missing episodes turn up, picking up more profits for the BBC. The latest *Years* release — 170 minutes for £20 — is also very poor value for money. Once again, the Earth's resources are wasted by stretching programmes across two tapes when they would comfortably fit on one. Many recent big-budget feature films run as long as this and are available for £11.99 or £12.99. BBC Enterprises cannot justify charging so much for programmes which their licence-payers have already funded — particularly when the link sequences are so cheaply done — and this tactic of continually short-changing the customer will surely rebound on them in dwindling sales. Despite being an avid Tom Baker fan, I will not be buying these tapes.

Darren Powls
Cwmbran, Gwent

Like many readers, I did not do cartwheels of delight when I read the list of prospective video releases for 1993. As consumers we have the final choice. Nobody is being forced to buy anything. If the special tapes are not commercially successful, BBC Video will stop releasing them. We should vote with our pockets and make it clear that original, complete and uneditted stories are what we want from BBC Video.

However, even the current selection process is too random and uneven. Six out of the seven Doctors have complete stories in the archives, so a fairer system would be to release 2 complete stories per Doctor, per year. (Should any missing stories be found, they can be added as an extra release, as *Tomb of the Cybermen* was). The releases should be on a six month cycle — eg. a Hartnell tape in the first month: a Pertwee tape the following month, and so on. The stories released for each Doctor should be chronological, and begin with the earliest unreleased story from each.

I think this is a fair and acceptable way of releasing WHO videos, as it isn't biased to any particular era or Doctor, ensures a wide range of stories, and there would be a new video in the shops every month.

Stephen Mater
Aberdeen

I wonder if anyone has noticed the resemblance between Nigel, the loudmouthed buffoon played by Paul Bradley in EASTENDERS, and John Nathan-Turner.

Do they have anything else in common? I think we should be told!

John Papadatos
Melbourne, Australia

I must congratulate you on the success of the new format of *DWB*, especially the new rewiew section at the back. As I've only recently started watching and enjoying other British telefantasy besides DOCTOR WHO, the reviews of the video releases have become a good reference point as to what is good on video.

I think I must add my voice to the growing number concerned over the 1993 DOCTOR WHO video selections. I feel as it's the 30th anniversary year the BBC, along with Enterprises should strongly promote the nostalgic aspects of the programme to the general public and release good complete stories. I mean, if the general public is induced into buying a WHO tape and they enjoy it, they will be back for more. However, if what is on offer are incomplete stories or *Years* tapes, then the general public will not be interested, as such tapes are really for fans only. Being the anniversary year, Enterprises should release complete stories from every Doctor (with the exception of Troughton, but *The Invasion* should make up for that). I feel Enterprises are becoming more and more short-sighted concerning the WHO video releases, thinking less and less of what consumers might want and more and more on what would make them a quick profit, while at the same time the BBC continue to evade the question of a new series.

Stephen Turnock
Cheadle, Staffordshire

I was very dissappointed to read about the postponement of the repeats season. I was greatly looking forward to this, particularly the new colour version of *The Dæmons*. It is ironic that the scheduler made his timing error on DOCTOR WHO and not on the weaker material like THE ADAMS FAMILY and THE MAN FROM UNCLE.

Like many other readers I am disgusted with the 1993 video schedule. All these specials and incomplete stories are of little interest to the general public. I would have thought that BBC Enterprises would have aimed for the largest audiences possible and not just catered to the whims of die hard fans. It's a shame that we will now have to wait well over a year before they begin to release some of the classic stories that are long overdue.

Michael Stevens
Edgbaston, Birmingham

It's a crazy, outlandish idea, but... what if, in the midst of all their madness, the BBC's recent outlines for future DOCTOR WHO video releases were based upon a sensible theory? That theory being whilst the show is proving to be a popular repeat on BBC2, perhaps the video outlet could become the reserve of 'non-broadcast-worthy, fan-specialist' documentaries, incomplete stories and other 'specials'. Is this their way of thinking? As I say, crazy and outlandish...

The #105 letters page presents a picture of 'fandom united' against the proposed new video releases. The vociferousness with which the correspondents argue for their personal classics (*Keeper*, *Inferno*, *Seeds Of Doom*) to be released (like hostages) surprises me. The whole BBC Video industry is patently a swizzle. These programmes were funded once-over by BBC licence fees. New programmes are still being paid for in the same way. There is no justification for the Corporation's demand that old DOCTOR WHO and other programme episodes should be paid for, in effect, twice-over. Licence payers (i.e. the general public) have a right to be shown the repeats they have blatantly requested.

The postponement of the next batch of DOCTOR WHO repeats, spearheaded by *The Dæmons*, was a disappointment, but the mere fact of their imminence is excellent. When we can see and record these episodes for the price of our licence fee alone, how can fans still abide by the practice of arguing which episodes should be put up for sale at extortionate sums on pre-recorded tapes (which are often of varying quality anyway)?

WHERE'S JNT?

Paul Raven
Romford, Essex

Well, well, well, the 'New Adventures' books really have taken off after the mind-blowing tedium of *Revelation*, *Times Crucible* and *Warhead*. *Witchmark* was good, but by golly *Nightshade* is superb! My only gripe is that poor old JNT doesn't get a mention anywhere! Surely he could be billed as an advisor? Or even creator of Ace and the seventh Doctor. Failing that merely "thanks to JNT, current producer of DOCTOR WHO". I cannot believe he hasn't got his finger in this particular pie and would like to see a character called Nathan Turner introduced as the Doctor's companion.

EARTHSHOCK —
THE BEGINNING OF THE END

J P Hooksmith (2)
London

I'd like to commend Ian Berriman for his excellent review of *Earthshock*, he did full justice to one of the finest of all WHO stories, and it's release on video is long overdue. However (and it seems that with eighties DOCTOR WHO there is always a however), I would like to expand upon the analysis of *Earthshock* as an independent video release by explaining why I feel it heralded the beginning of the end for DOCTOR WHO. Not *Earthshock*, surely? Well, not on its own perhaps,but in it's aftermath DOCTOR WHO's hopes for sucess in a new decade were hopelessly dashed.

On 22nd March 1982, over ten million people tuned in to watch DOCTOR WHO, most of them, I would imagine, in eager anticipation of what would follow. The previous Tuesday, for the first time in living memory a companion of the good Doctor was killed, in a highly emotional and hard hitting manner. I remember my reaction as a ten year old, crying myself to sleep at Adric's fate (I kid you not. Some of us liked him at the time), and even my normally cynical parents were left somewhat shocked by the episode's climax. DOCTOR WHO had a nation of television viewers hooked, and eager for the next turn of events. There is nothing guaranteed to raise the ratings of a series more quickly than a tragic death or two. So on the 22nd, all ten million plus viewers sat down to watch BBC1 — and were given *Time-Flight*. Adric's death was brushed under the carpet, and completely forgotten about within five minutes of the story. Almost as if it had never happened. After having to endure twenty more minutes of virtual pantomime, two million viewers declined to return the following evening. Obviously those people who had told them DOCTOR WHO was pretty damn good at the moment were living in cuckoo land. And the chance to grab the floating viewer was gone. When DOCTOR WHO returned nine months later, the programme had lost a further million viewers, the memory of the season finale lingering in the mind more freshly than the quality of it's predecessor. And decline had begun.

But imagine if *Earthshock* had been followed by something equally dramatic. Imagine that a story transpired where the Doctor, consumed by guilt, returned to the very dawn of the Cyber-race to wipe them out forever, only to find himself with a crucial role to play in their creation. Or perhaps the Doctor choosing to retire only to be dragged back into action by some unnatural disaster threatening the universe. The possibilities were endless. And we got *Time-Flight*. Season 19 could have ended with an additional two or three million had the momentum been maintained. But alas, all we have now are maybe's. If anyone out there really believes John Nathan-Turner was a competent producer of DOCTOR WHO, or had any inkling of what constitutes good drama, please explain his decision to follow *Earthshock* with *Time-Flight*, as it doesn't make any sense to me at all.

And just to finish on, comparing Andrew Skilleter's cover for BBC Video, and Pete Wallbank's depiction of *Earthshock*, don't you feel it's time for Andy to be put out to pasture?

Gary — As I recall, Adric's death even made the Daily Mail's obituary column!

ALAN BENNETT FOR CONTROLLER BBC1!

Gary Robinson
Rotherham, South Yorkshire

DWB has finally made me put pen to paper to agree completly with your letter from Laurence Piper. I am sick to the back teeth of how British tv and the BBC are just becoming a shadow of America. Even the latest *Screen One* is set in America. You only have to look back to the Christmas Special of ONLY FOOLS AND HORSES, they couldn't wait to get it over to America — whatever happened to the good old *Play for Today* reflecting real life British drama? The breeding ground for writers like Bennett, Potter, Bleasdale and Mike Leigh, plays that reflected everyday peoples' lives. The BBC has now become a no risk boring channel! If I had my way I'd replace Jonathan Powell immediately with Alan Bennett, one of the few people left who has the guts to speak out on the state of British tv.

A NEED FOR RELEVANT SCIENCE FICTION

Andy Walker
Wednesfield, West Midlands

Poor old DOCTOR WHO. No room for him and his loosely associated genre (SF) in the 1990s. B*ll*cks! Just look at the glut of repeats being foisted upon us now. What we really need right now, more than at any other time in the past, is something to rekindle thoughts of self-examination.

I always thought DOCTOR WHO was at its most poignant when examining key issues of its time — i.e. racism in *The Daleks, The Savages, The Mutants* and countless others (surely *the* most significant black spot on the human condition at the moment — perhaps *Silver Nemesis* and its, at the time, quite clichéd inclusion of a Fourth Reich was a solemnly accurate case of sad premonition?), sexism to a degree (with initially strong female characters like Sarah-Jane) and environmental concerns in *The Green Death*, and even the much maligned *Curse of Fenric*. Something to stir the national concience at bleak times such as these.

Science-fiction is an ideal vehicle for such fundamental soul-searching concepts, especially DOCTOR WHO with its oft-quoted flexible format. What we need is new material — completely relevant to today.

It's probably very naive to suggest that the resurrection of a 'tired' SF programme could help, but a youth weaned on endless soaps, dire game-shows and increased indulgence in convenient pulp nostalgia gives me the creeps — the 'Happiness Patrol' here we come!

We desperately need a new series, bang up-to-date with thought-provoking storylines (à la DOOMWATCH but not in a creaky 1970's fashion), good visuals, mind-bending concepts and a deliciously mysterious rendition of the theme and titles.

Just the carrot the BBC have dangled in front of our noses for the last few years. Ah well, here's to anniversary year — long live DOCTOR WHO and all who sailed with him!

ANIMATION IS NOT THE WAY TO GO

Neil Hogan
Chester Hill, Australia.

DWB is evolving in leaps and bounds. Excellent. I found *The Mark of Destruction* articles interesting, though I'm sure that you'll get one or two letters saying how self-praising Ian Levine is. What they have to remember is that it's a transcription. If Levine had written it I'm sure he would've edited any deserved praise. If we had people like Levine working officially at the BBC I'm sure DOCTOR WHO would still be the success that it was.

Which conveniently leads me to my next point. Unfortunately too much time has now passed for a new series of DOCTOR WHO to be a viable venture in its original format. Too much time has passed for any old tv series to return. No matter how good TOMORROW PEOPLE II will be it won't attract the same number of viewers as it's predecessor. A completely new format is needed for DOCTOR WHO to return. Not just 50 minute episodes, new Doctor, better FX etc, but an entirely new medium.

Animation... is *not* what I'm talking about. An animated series would go down well if Alister Pearson was to paint each frame or the entire series was generated on computer, or a mixture of both. The cartoon series of TEENAGE MUTANT NINJA TURTLES is currently the only cartoon with good artwork, and it's worth watching just for that. (Ok, so the continual references to DOCTOR WHO is a drawcard too). Compare it to the primitiveness of Warner Brothers or Disney cartoons or even SCOOBY DOO and THE FLINTSTONES. The sketches are grating, painful, dire and repetitive.

If DOCTOR WHO is to return as an animated series then the frames must be much better than the latest *Beauty & The Beast* movie, and excellent scripts goes without saying. But, as I've said before, animation is not the way to go.

DWB 105

Allan J. Palmer
Basingstoke, Hants

As usual, the letters pages of #105 contained a good pot pourri of views. Hopefully, notice will be taken of the fans' views regarding the quality (or lack of) of some of the video packages. If WHO fandom awarded the equivalent of Oscars, then Ian Levine deserves a trunk full for his accomplishments in saving so much from being lost. I support John Riley's view that *Shada* is value for money — Tom Baker does seem to enjoy himself as the Doctor linking the recordings. I was also pleased to find a sticker on my copy advising me that "All of Douglas Adams' royalties from the sale of this video are being donated to Comic Relief"! Does this mean that Messrs Henry and Rhys-Jones will be mentioning this on the next Comic Relief extravaganza?

I'm pleased to see the introduction of the ST/ST:TNG novels to your review section. Any chance of including reviews of non-fiction, i.e. reference works as well?

The ITC Video releases are welcome additions to the video shelves. The SAPPHIRE AND STEEL series being my favourites — this was a unique series, one of those rare gems that are sometimes found amidst the dross that is often turned out on television.

Andrew Pixley
Nottingham

Congratulations on the standardised format which now is really showing how succesful it is! (i.e. #105) Highlight of the issue has to be the lovely overview of THE ADDAMS FAMILY by John S Hall which was enjoyable and informative, as well as well illustrated. I have to comment on John Pettigrew's review of *The Doctor Who Year Book* and thank him for the kind words about my piece on the sonic screwdriver. I must admit that this had worried me a great deal as the original intention had been to do a far more in-depth piece and study all the different versions of the prop (about five I reckon) and all the instances of its use. However, I ran out of time!

And finally, Jonathan Powell did seem to get at least one show right during his tenure — yes, I'll admit it — I loved VIRTUAL MURDER!

Anthony Brown
Chelmsford, Essex

Editing of my news item in *DWB 106* (my own fault for overwriting massively) lost most of my explanation of how Jonathan Powell might face the sack early next year. Normally a Controller and DG would co-operate over scheduling but, knowing that he's on the way out anyway, Powell might decide to renew ELDORADO in the face of Birt's opposition, in the hope that its ratings will improve (as they inevitably will sooner or later) in time for him to leave the BBC with his reputation intact. If so, then Birt could only get the series cancelled if he were to have Powell replaced ... Also, I'm not egotistical enough to claim that Michael Grade's speech had echoed my own article — that comment was introduced by *DWB* when a long summary of Grade's speech had to be omitted ...

I think David Gibbs is being over-optimistic in hoping that JNT's early seasons won't come under attack — now that the Williams era is (justly) back in favour, season 18 and 19 are back in the firing line, and are likely to remain so while JNT remains with BBC Video, making it beyond the pale to like *anything* he's ever done. Pity — they're two of the best, and Chris Bidmead certainly doesn't deserve the flak Gary Russell's giving him ...

Finally, Simon Kinnear might be relieved to know that the second TWIN PEAKS marathon hasn't happened yet (probably because *Fire Walk With Me* still hasn't been released). I'd guess it'll be in November — contact the Prince Charles Cinema, off Leicester Square, for details.

SAPPHIRE AND STEEL

David Sheldrick
Lewisham, London

A belated 'thank you' for the SAPPHIRE AND STEEL article in *DWB 102* — good to see this gem of a series receiving the recognition it deserves. Had it not suffered the twin blows of the 1979 ITV 'blackout' and more especially, ATV losing its franchise, I see no reason why, properly nurtured, SAPPHIRE AND STEEL shouldn't have run for a number of years. The format allowed for a great deal of flexibility, much of it unrealised by the series' limited run (eg. non-earth settings, alien beings, introducing more of the other 'elements', explaining Sapphire and Steel's origins).

What was most remarkable about SAPPHIRE AND STEEL was surely:

1) how in an age of space-opera-type science-fiction (*Star Wars*, SPACE 1999, BLAKE'S SEVEN etc) an almost entirely studio-bound series with no monsters and few special effects came to be made in the first place and transmitted at peak-time on ITV.

2) how such a consistently challenging, innovative, intelligent even cerebal piece of drama drew substantial audiences (certainly, from what I recall of the Season One ratings), when its other-worldy weirdness and somewhat ponderous pace at times, made it sit a little uneasily besides the more instant appeal of run-of-the-mill early evening ITV. I can only think that the sheer quality of the scripts, direction and acting presented a direct appeal to a sizeable proportion of the public. I certainly found it compelling viewing, and seeing the first three stories again on video has compounded this initial impression.

The SAPPHIRE AND STEEL / ACE OF WANDS — type telefantasy — intuitive, mysterious, surreal, atmospheric, poetic, more an exploration of psychic possibility than a journey into outer-space, as such — has always struck me as the ideal path which DOCTOR WHO might have taken when its more overtly horrific monster-based discourse was virtually compelled to a premature grave with Philip Hinchcliffe's departure in 1977. SAPPHIRE AND STEEL showed that a low-budget (in terms of tv drama) series shot on video, but carefully lit and seriously executed could still be as atmospheric and at times sinister in mood as, say, the more extravagant film/location-based DOCTOR WHO spectaculars like *Inferno* or *Seeds of Doom* (two of my WHO favourites, incidentally). SAPPHIRE AND STEEL has a scaled down, almost minimalistic feel but uses this as its greatest asset; by concentrating on quality performances from its lead actors, creative camerawork — the way in which the camera lingers significantly on the most familiar object to imbue it with that sense of latent menace or 'otherness' — the use of poignant pauses and even silences to create a sense of brooding anticipation or unease ... all these qualities gave the series a gravity, a sense of purpose which increasingly eluded DOCTOR WHO during the 80s.

The kinds of themes which ACE OF WANDS and SAPPHIRE AND STEEL explored could quite easily have been woven into the fabric of DOCTOR WHO allowing it an injection of fresh ideas, a maintaining of its sense of mystery and atmosphere, but in a way which avoided the graphic depictions of violence and horror which caused so much controversy.

Instead, under Graham Willims and John Nathan-Turner, DOCTOR WHO opted for the easy option of all telefantasy struggling for new ideas — comedy, pastiche, send-up. The post-1977 descent into a cul-de-sac of nostalgia-ridden self-consciousness and pantomimesque / camp style resulted in a loss of integrity from which DOCTOR WHO has never recovered (and maybe never will).

Liam Brison
Easington, Durham

SAPPHIRE AND STEEL is one of the most intriguing programmes ever made for British television and yet despite its original success and the affectionate memories many people have of it there has been a sad deficiency in articles and discussion devoted to the series. I thought I would share a few of my thoughts on the subject.

My first memory of the series is that I missed it. I remember going to school and everyone talking about a scary new series which had begun the previous night and I was angry at being left out. I watched the second episode and have been hooked ever since. A few years ago I was over-joyed at being able to view the series again whilst living in New Zealand and I am very glad that the series is now available in Britain.

This is surreal television and often incomprehensible, facts which tend to split viewers right down the middle. There seem to be an equal array of arguments on either side between those who dismiss it as a load of boring pseudo-intellectual twaddle and those who claim the show as a fascinating television milestone. I take the latter stance myself and claim to be a 'fan' so I'm not unbiased. But what is known of the series? How do these episodes from 1979 hold up by today's standards? Does anybody really understand what's going on?

Thanks to the article by Richard Molesworth in *DWB102*, background information on the recording and transmission of the series is now available. However, I do feel it is a great pity that ITC have not taken this opportunity to provide definitive titles for the stories and thus end the arguments which have run for years. Although I too had heard of the "working titles" mentioned in the article (*Escape Through a Crack in Time, The Railway Station, The Creatures Revenge, The Man Without a Face, Doctor McDee Must Die* and *The Trap*) for several years I have used a different list of titles most of which I have heard used by other fans. I don't know when I first heard them, but they seem to be quite widely used and I feel that not only are they more "snappy" but also, given that one of the joys of the programme is not knowing what the final threat or plot twist is until well through the story, these alternative titles are far more suitable. As a matter of interest then here are the six titles: 'Nursery Rhymes', 'The Railway Station', 'Animals', 'Pictures', 'The Party' (aka 'The Virus'), and 'The Petrol Station'. In particular I feel that *The Trap* is a terrible giveaway. I know it sounds like a lot of fuss over very little (something that can often irritate me about certain WHO articles) but it really would have been nice if after almost fourteen years we could have had official story titles. I suppose such anonymity is only fitting for a series which failed to explain so much.

It seems to me that PJ Hammond created a programme format rivalled only by DOCTOR WHO for its originality and scope. Who are Sapphire and Steel? What are they? Where do they come from? Who sends them on missions? What limits do their powers have? Why are these questions never answered? People are always stressing the mystery which surrounded the Doctor before *The War Games* and yet we knew that he was good. We knew how he travelled in time and space. We knew that he had no special powers beyond quick wits and the ultimate ability to regenerate his body. We knew that he was an alien who had escaped from his home planet with his 'grand-daughter', Susan. We knew what the title sequence meant. SAPPHIRE AND STEEL raised more questions than early WHO ever did and it refused to yield answers to the very end.

There are many good writers in fandom who regularly turn their attention and pens to articles on WHO and NEXT GEN. so why is it that series such as SAPPHIRE AND STEEL and TWIN PEAKS are so criminally ignored? I can't believe that there is a lack of readership interest and yet such potentially rich veins of writing material have gone largely untapped. The subject matter may be a little difficult but is there nobody out there ready to rise to the challenge?

NO VENDETTAS PLEASE

Paul Winter
Lewes, East Sussex

Thank you for *DWB 105*, another excellent issue. However, I do feel that Gary's article, *Credit Where It's Due*, smacks of vindictiveness.

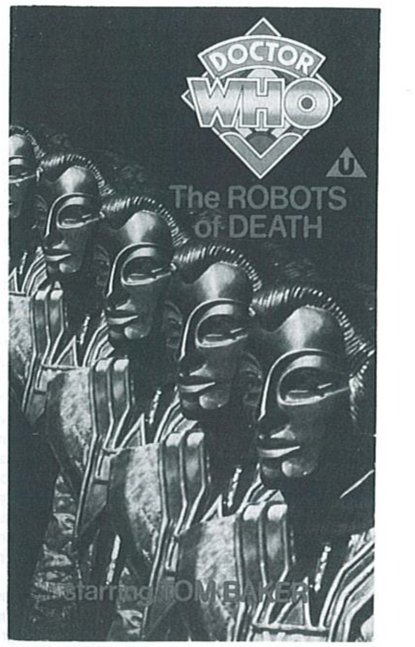
I do not want to appear to be one of those people who have to back up JNT no matter what, but I do think Gary is being somewhat unfair. Why Richard Landen was not given a sleeve credit on the two new audio tapes is easy to speculate about, but I see no reason why JNT, as producer of the tapes and writer of the links, should not have a credit himself. His creative input into the tapes is quite high, and I think they are rather well done too. Gary does go on to shoot himself in the foot by pointing out on the next page that the tapes have been so popular that they actually entered the Gallup chart!

I have enjoyed all the era videos JNT produced, with the obvious exception of the diabolical *Pertwee Years*, and found the Dalek tape to be probably the best, which makes me ask who really cares about the incorrect title given to an episode broadcast in 1963? It could have been an error on Peter Davison's part just as easily as JNT's. I also found *Shada* to be an excellent production, although I too have my doubts over future releases of incomplete stories.

If *DWB* is going to constantly criticise JNT then please, be reasonable about it, or we may begin to think that someone has a vendetta out for him.

Chris Boucher

Chris Boucher is a name well-known to fans of British telefantasy. In his capacity as Blake's 7 script-editor, Doctor Who script-writer and Star Cops creator he has been responsible for some of the best science-fiction seen on British tv in the last fifteen years. In the first part of a two-part interview he tells **Alan Stevens** and **Anthony Brown** how he got into writing and what persuaded him to give up the day job …



ALAN STEVENS: I understand that you were an only child. Do you think it made you more imaginative?

It made me lonelier, certainly, and so I suppose it tends to make you more self-contained. When I was nine, my best friend who lived just across the street from me contracted meningitis and died, and so losing your best friend at that age can make you feel more isolated somehow, and makes you more self-absorbed. I've always found it difficult to socialise and make friends, which I suppose explains why I've got three kids of my own now — I've got my own unit.

ANTHONY BROWN: Did you always read a lot when you were young?

Yes, I did. As a kid of about eleven or twelve I became something of an addict of the romantic short stories that appeared in the women's magazines that my mother and my grandmother used to get. So I read quite a lot of those, along with a lot of science fiction and anything else really that came to hand. As I recall I discovered sex in literature, with a book called Forever Amber and I remember I was completely wrapped, it was a cracking story.

AS: When you left grammar school did you go straight to university?

No, I went to Australia.

AS: Really? Why was that?

Well, at the time I had just missed National Service, they did away with it the year before I was due to be called up. It was a stupid system, but the one thing that it did do was give you the chance to leave home. So when my generation's turn came, there was no way to leave home any more. Unless you were going to university, and I wasn't because I'd screwed up my A-levels.

AS: Do you think it's essential that there is something to help you make that break with your parents?

I don't know if it's essential, but I mean everyone's got to leave home at some stage, and it's one of the functions of university to allow you, as parent and child, to break without having to make excuses about it, without having to feel that initial hurt. National Service was a way of doing that, University is a good way of doing that, going to Australia is a way of doing that I suppose, and after you have made that break and come back, you are really just a guest in your parents' house.

AS: What did you do when your year was up?

I returned home, arriving on my mother's birthday, unannounced, clutching a bunch of flowers and I think I had five shillings old money in my pocket. And there I stayed, because basically I didn't have a lot of choice, I didn't have anything left. I'd spent a year of boozing and carousing, in fact that was the point I discovered what drug dependence must be like. I'd spent six weeks coming back on a passenger cruise-liner where the booze was all duty-free, and so about three days after I got home I started to shake, I needed a drink very badly. It came as a nasty shock to discover that I had become alcohol dependent. I worry less about it now, of course.

AB: What sort of work did you do when you got back home?

I boiled ball bearings for a while, and then my father got me a job with the company he worked for, which was Calor Gas and I became what was laughingly known as a management trainee. I met my wife and at twenty-two I got married, I went to night school to get my A-levels and then Calor Gas very generously sent me to Essex University. Somewhat less generously to read economics, which I wasn't hugely interested in. What do they call it? The gloomy science? I'm not sure it's even a science actually. I got a BA and then I came back to Calor Gas and sort of worked off my debt.

AS: What made you start writing?

I had been married for four years and up until that point we had both worked. Although I was still at University I was getting an allowance from Calor Gas, which wasn't a huge amount, but obviously a hell of a lot more than one would get from the average University grant. Then Lyn became pregnant and had to give up work, which left us marginally strapped for cash, so I was looking around for means of making money and writing was one possibility. I did some, what I discovered later were called three-line quickies, for a television programme called BRADEN'S WEEK and also I wrote a couple of short stories and sent them off to woman's magazines. I think I did a science fiction story as well, which I whacked off somewhere and then sat back and waited for the money to start flooding in. However the only thing that did sell, and looking back on it I was extremely lucky that anything sold at all, were the three-line quickies I'd sent to BRADEN'S WEEK, and for that I got paid the princely sum of five quid apiece, which was a lot of money in those days. Later when I became a regular contributor, they upped that to ten quid a throw and I started averaging about thirty quid a week, which was very nice indeed. In fact I was doing so well they actually gave me a contract on the last series, where they paid me twenty-five quid a week no matter what.

AS: Did you then go on to bombard the BBC with scripts and ideas?

No not really, I did a lot of three-line quickies for other people like Dave Allen but strictly on a submission basis, and by then I had an agent, a very nice guy called John Hayes and it was he who suggested DOCTOR WHO because they took work from non-established drama writers and so it was a way in. Although I had done a couple of sitcoms by then, John was trying to broaden my range and get me to the point where I could give up the day job. So I did a first episode on spec and my agent sent it to the script-editor Robert Holmes, and then later I was called in by the producer Philip Hinchcliffe and the three of us got together and had a long chat. The episode I had submitted on spec was only about fifteen minutes in length if that, but Bob thought he could use me. He was trying to push DOCTOR WHO towards a more mature audience, which he was doing largely I think to coincide with his own tastes, because he wasn't really a great lover of children's programming.

AS: Did the 15-minute script become The Face of Evil?

No, that story came later, the only thing that I can really remember about the other script is the title, which was *The Silent Scream.*

AS: So how did The Face of Evil come about?

The cast and crew of the BBC production *Image of the Fendahl*

The idea owes quite a bit I think to *Captive Universe*, a novel by Harry Harrison, and also probably to various other SF novels that I've read over the years, but then anyone who says they write completely original material is either insane or a liar, or possibly both.

Anyway, because I was new, Bob Holmes kept sending me away to write more and more detailed story-lines, saying things like, "We need to know about this character, and this area needs developing". Until eventually the story-line ended up longer than the final script! I still remember now Bob saying to me, "Story-lining is all of the hard work and none of the fun". Which is true, because all script-writers are basically dialogue writers, and that's really what I prefer.

AS: I read somewhere recently that the original title for your first story was The Day God Went Mad. What made you think you could get away with a title like that?

It fitted what I was doing that's all. The story was about these two groups of people who had become enslaved by tradition and by a super computer who was God, so it seemed reasonable to call the story *The Day God Went Mad*, particularly since the machine was finally going off the rails and becoming a vengeful God, but really I'm not hugely wedded to titles; I've always found titles quite difficult to arrive at satisfactorily. And for the most part I was quite happy for people to suggest and alter titles within reason.

AB: What did you think of the direction? Pennant Roberts can be a bit variable.

I was sat at the back of the gallery when *Face of Evil* was being done, it was the first time that I'd actually been invited to a gallery session and poor Pennant was having problems, as they always did, because they worked on a very tight budget and time was money, and you flaming well had to get everything done within the recording period because over-runs were damned expensive and you couldn't always get them. So Pennant was pushing and something wasn't going right, and at one point he said, "Oh come on it's only television, let's move on". And then he remembered that I was sitting behind him and he looked back and said, "Oh well, er, I mean it's very good television", or words to that effect, and then said, "I hope I didn't upset you?"

But I learned some lessons from sitting at the back of the gallery, lessons that were confirmed for me over the years. Pennant is a jolly man who has a realistic view of what he is doing, he is not a major stylist, but then they are few and far between, especially on video in studio, on what was regarded as work-a-day television. DOCTOR WHO and programmes like it did a very useful job for writers and directors, they were the beginners slopes, where you were taught your trade. I don't think for the most part it showed because people were excited to get the chance, so they basically worked very hard to make the most of what they had been given. But now, unfortunately, those opportunities are no longer there, because people are not prepared to take chances anymore and this has resulted in totally safe television. The only thing that seems to matter now is that you don't offend anybody.

AS: Usually DOCTOR WHO stories end with something being blown up, however this didn't happen to the computer in The Face of Evil. Was that your idea?

Yes, all the story details were worked out by me, the only thing that did change in relation to the end was that I didn't want to have a scene where the Doctor actually gets to meet the computer. I remember saying at the time, "Look this is supposed to be the computer equivalent of God, an absolutely major super-brain. Now how the hell am I going to write dialogue for that? You know I'm not clever enough to come up with conversation for God!" And Philip said, "But you've got to. We can't have gone through all this without having a confrontation scene of some sort. You've got to have the Doctor and the computer talking to each other, I'm sorry, but you have to do it." So eventually I did.

AB: Wasn't Leela inspired by a Palestinian terrorist?

Yeah, Leila Khaled, she was from a time when plane hijacking was still considered to be an almost idealistic, brave and noble thing to do. She was jailed for her beliefs and no one had been killed. She was glamorous, she was articulate, but she also became the precursor of some rather less appealing people and happenings.

AS: I've heard that Leela was created originally just for one particular story.

Yes, that's right. From what Bob Holmes told me, I gather that Tom Baker had always wanted to go solo, and so I suspect that's one of the reasons why writers at that stage were being asked to create companions for their own particular episodes. Simply to keep him happy.

AS: Why did the idea fall through?

I don't know really. I was just told that they liked the character of Leela and that they wanted me to immediately do another four parter with her, which I did and then discovered after that they intended to carry on with her. Now whether that was a result of the casting or as a result of the way the character was going I don't know.

AS: To my mind the character of Leela seemed to become more and more diluted as the series progressed.

Yes, that did seem to happen. The character was originally conceived as a reaction against the little screaming companion type, but as it went on things did seem to revert back somewhat, though obviously not to quite the same extent as some of them had been.

AS: Leela got married you know.

Really?

AS: To a Time Lord no less.

I didn't know that, and it does seem a bit strange, but to tell you the truth I wasn't actually watching the programme at that point anyway, because I'd become involved with other things.

AS: What provided the initial inspiration for your second story The Robots of Death?

Well, the Sandminer was fairly obviously I think from *Dune*, the robots themselves, well there could have been an Isaac Asimov influence there I suppose, but I can't really remember. I just like the idea of machine intelligences, and I liked the idea that it is possible for intelligences to have human characteristics, that develop as the artificial intelligence develops. In other words, there is not a lot of difference between human intelligence and machine intelligence once you reach a certain stage.

AB: Both The Face of Evil and The Robots of Death are unusual in so far as television SF goes, in that although they are about insane robots and insane computers killing people, in both cases it is an externally imposed insanity, rather than a malevolence from within.

That's because I don't believe in malevolent machines, I don't actually believe in malevolence to be truthful, and I suspect most insanity is imposed from outside. Now obviously there are some organic failures in the brain which will produce symptoms of insanity, and as we speak no one knows what schizophrenia really is, but I don't believe there is such a thing as fundamental evil.

AS: Well I don't think in black and white either, but you must admit there are some very dark shades of grey wandering around out there!

Oh God yes, there are some evil bastards about, but I don't believe in evil as an abstract. I don't think you can say, "Ooh look at that bastard. There is a chunk of pure evil." I mean evil arises out of situations, it arises out of inadequacies, pain and ignorance and fear, and I suspect it's awfully easy to stumble into evil and to stumble into being evil, or into being what is perceived as evil. but I don't believe that it starts out that way. I often get depressed by the way society appears to be going, where you hear strange politicians, and God knows we've got a lot of those now, saying, "It's no excuse to say that joy-riding and rioting arise because of unemployment," and I find myself yelling at the television, "No one's saying that it's an excuse, they're saying it's an explanation, you stupid twat!"

AS: People often make the mistake of confusing explanation with justification.

Yeah. Just because I feel I understand why something arises doesn't mean that I approve of it.

AS: And it doesn't mean you'll act the same way.

No and it also doesn't mean that you stand there and condemn it as evil. I think if we could possibly lose the word 'evil' altogether it would be a great help.

AB: The trouble is it's a lot simpler and easier to think in terms of black and white, and so most people do.

AS: (laughing) Do you think Tom Baker was an evil man, because a lot of people didn't like him?

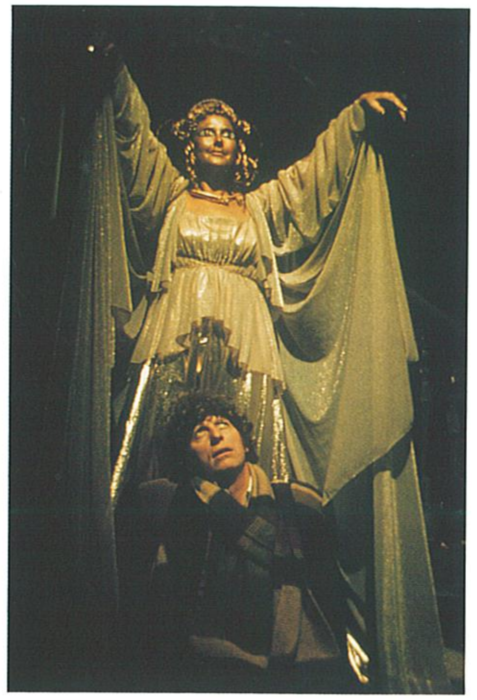
Good Lord no, he was an actor.

AS: Some people described him as a monster though didn't they?

Well he *was* a monster! He was a big man, he was physically big, he had a big personality and a big ego to go with it, and from a writers point of view he was a pain in the butt certainly. I mean I went to a read-through of one of my scripts once, when Tom was in full flow. George Spenton-Foster, who is not one of my favourite directors, had done what he always did and taken the cast out to lunch and got them all drunk. So when I turned up at the read-through I was the only sober one there, and Tom was sending my script up something rotten. I hadn't been to many read-throughs back then, and I must say I was deeply embarrassed, and at that point I really hated him. I went back to my office and kicked a couple of filing cabinets until I could clearly see the shape of my foot in the bottom drawers. I also remember expressing at the time a great desire to see the bastard die in a cellar full of rats! I got over it eventually and I liked Tom on those occasions that I met him after that, but he was a big guy, you know.

AS: What was Tom doing? Picking out all the double-entendres?

Yeah, and it makes you paranoid about these things, because you know that in the read-through, anything that can be taken in that way will be, and eventually it gets to the point where you find yourself spotting them and thinking, "Oh no, I'm not having that line in," and



The Doctor (Tom Baker) and the Fendahl core (Wanda Ventham) from Chris Boucher's *Image of the Fendahl* © BBC

taking it out and writing in something else that can't be taken that way. Which is silly, but it's a sort of function of paranoid embarrassment.

AS: From what I've heard, it wasn't just writers Tom gave a rough time to, either.

It was explained to me once why the gallery was so high up and had this great long ladder leading down to the studio floor. Apparently if a director really did his nut and went down to kill an actor, he would hopefully have regained his composure by the time he reached him! On one occasion I actually saw this happen, Tom had been a right pain all day, and suddenly the director leapt to his feet and said, "Right, I'm going to kill the bastard," and headed for the door, but of course by the time he had climbed all the way down the ladder it had changed to, "Tom dear boy, this possibly is not quite the way we should be doing it."

AB: How did the story-line for Image of the Fendahl come about?

I've got a feeling that the inspiration for that one came from a short story that I read, about a society which after growing up and achieving scientific and technical expertise, built this space ship. Whereupon an alien, who had set the whole thing in motion in the first place, popped up out of hibernation, climbed in the ship and flew away. The population then collapsed into barbarism and eventually returned to primitive life forms — rats as I recall. It was a striking little story, and so I used it as my kicking-off point. I think Nigel Kneale used a similar notion in QUATERMASS AND THE PIT.

AS: I thought the rubber monster that appeared in the story looked a little unconvincing. It was a sort of green sleeping-bag affair wasn't it?

And it was inexperience on my part that made the thing look worse. I mean, if I was writing it now, I would make the monster into something that could be done as an optical or a video effect, or not even show it at all. I certainly wouldn't spend three episodes building up to it, because that's a major error anyway, you really do build up audience expectations and then to have this cuddly caterpillar come on, well it makes it even more of a let-down.

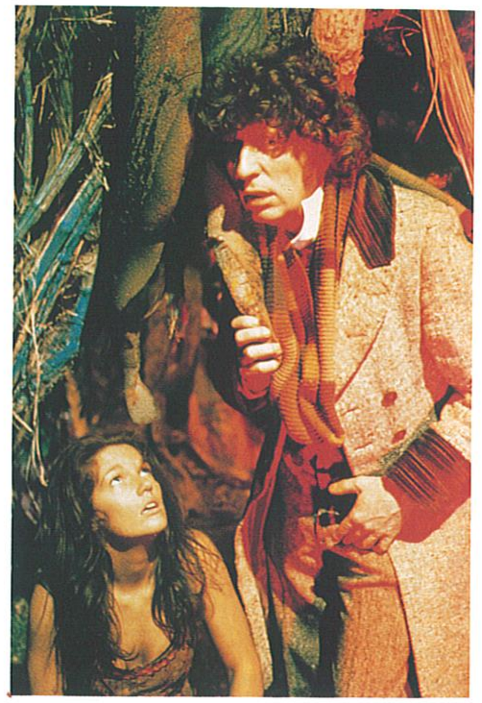
AB: Did you notice a difference when Graham Williams took over as producer?

The first thing I noticed when Graham took over was this extremely weird framework that he had come up with for the series, which involved time paradoxes and various esoteric formulae, all of which was total crap. At least, I think it was total crap. I can remember once accusing Bob Holmes in the boozer of making up scientific terms, and he had sort of sucked his pipe and nodded. Then about a year later I came across the term again and found out what it meant, and he was right! So I went back and said, "You bastard, you let me sit there like a prat and say that you'd made up this bullshit, and you hadn't at all, it was true!" So maybe I am slandering the whole grand concept, but when I read this particular piece of paper I thought, well this is no help at all, it's got nothing to do with telling stories. Of course looking back, I can now see that it was all really just Graham's desperate attempts to find some new avenue down which to go, away from what had been attacked as violent, corrupting and generally not good for the children.

I don't know if Graham ever came across Terry Nation, but I remember Terry telling me in the bar one time that whenever he got letters from people complaining about scientific inaccuracies, he would just send back this standard letter which would say, "You will be aware of the formula XYZ to the power of 17..." He said it was all total bullshit and he didn't know what it meant, but he would just bung it off and they loved it!

AB: Image of the Fendahl was your final story for DOCTOR WHO. Why was that?

Chris Boucher's creation Leela (Louise Jameson) is menaced by one of the *Robots of Death* © BBC



Tom Baker and Louise Jameson © *BBC*

Well, I had a script aborted. While I was script editing BLAKE'S SEVEN I had this story idea which Graham liked and wanted to use in season sixteen. I had it all worked out in my head, and we were going to go ahead with it, when suddenly Ronnie Marsh, the Head of Series said, "No, I'm sorry, but you can't write for another show in the same department while you're script editing and writing for BLAKE'S SEVEN." Which was fair enough I suppose, but of course I then had this idea for a story and nowhere to use it, and it sort of sat there in the back of my head like a ... like a sort of...

AS: A sort of rock?

No. It was more like something had died there and it was gradually going rotten, you know, and bits of it start creeping into other stories.

AS: Why did you let Terrance Dicks destroy your Target book novelizations, instead of writing them yourself?

I think that's putting it a bit strong, but basically you get half the money and do none of the work, which sounds reasonable enough to me. Also around that time I was working on BLAKE'S SEVEN, so I doubt I would have had the time to do them myself anyway.

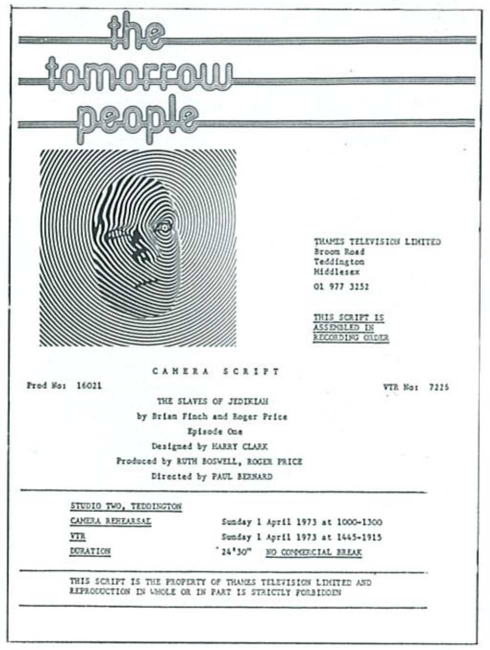
AB: How did you become involved with BLAKE'S SEVEN then?

David Maloney, who had previously worked on DOCTOR WHO as a director, was now working on BLAKE'S SEVEN as a first time producer. He contacted Bob Holmes and asked him if he would like to come and script-edit for the series, but Bob, who didn't really want to do any more script-editing, suggested me instead. So I went along and met David and we got on okay, and eventually he phoned me up and offered me the job, whereupon I resigned from Calor Gas instantly. I was very unhappy at Calor Gas by that stage anyway, and my only regret about leaving was that I didn't go to the guy I was working for and tell him where to stick his job, and that is a sort of regret. You know, I should have just walked in and said, "Listen you bastard, you can take your job and stick it where the sun don't shine, and you're a miserable prick to boot." But I didn't, I went along and said, "I'm sorry but I have to leave, I don't want to drop anybody in it, I'll serve my notice, but I'd like to leave as soon as possible." And I gave up the proper job and went to work for the BBC, and it was the best move I ever made. It was the happiest work related experience I've ever had before or since. It was great!

Next Issue: Chris Boucher talks about his work as script-editor on Blake's 7.

Nine into Eight

With November marking the relaunch of the 70s children's science-fiction show The Tomorrow People, DWB rekindles your memory with a potted history and episode guide to the original series, compiled by **Gary Clyde**



the
tomorrow
people

THAMES TELEVISION LIMITED
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THIS SCRIPT IS
ASSEMBLED IN
RECORDING ORDER

CAMERA SCRIPT

Prod No: 16021 VTR No: 7225

THE SLAVES OF JEDIKIAH
by Brian Finch and Roger Price
Episode One
Designed by HARRY CLARK
Produced by RUTH BOSWELL, ROGER PRICE
Directed by PAUL BERNARD

STUDIO TWO, TEDDINGTON
CAMERA REHEARSAL Sunday 1 April 1973 at 1000-1300
VTR Sunday 1 April 1973 at 1445-1915
DURATION 24'30" NO COMMERCIAL BREAK

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GIVEN the current television climate, it is hard to fathom why Thames TV has combined with American network, Nickleodeon, to revive a cheaply-made childrens' series from the 70's not seen on British screens for twelve years. Quite why a revamped TOMORROW PEOPLE should get off the ground whilst more obvious series such as BLAKE'S SEVEN, TIMESLIP and ROBIN OF SHERWOOD have failed is something of a mystery.

THE TOMORROW PEOPLE is still repeated endlessly in the USA by Nickleodeon, a cable channel broadcasting to some twenty-eight million homes. It is they are believed to have come up with the financial package which has got the revival off the ground, and Roger Price, who created the format and wrote all but four of the original sixty-eight episodes, is again closely involved. Now living in Ottawa, Price runs his own childrens production company, 'Kids Next Door', and has scripted the first five episodes which are set to premiere on ITV on November 18th. Whether the all-new series, independently produced for Thames Television by Tetra Films, will match the success of the original nearly twenty years on we'll have to see, but the shrewd casting of Kristian Schmidt from NEIGHBOURS has certainly given the project a running start.

Despite the show's long absence from British TV screens, and Thames' failure to recognise the money-spinning potential of releasing their archive material onto home video, the show still has a surprising following — a DWB Readers' Poll a couple of years ago placed it higher in popularity than ROBIN OF SHERWOOD, SPACE 1999 and TIMESLIP, but does the memory cheat?

The basic premise of the show was that of a group of youngsters who had progressed to the next stage of human evolution, homo superior, and had, in the process of 'breaking out' during adolescence, acquired powers of telepathy, telekinesis and teleportation (or 'jaunting' as they called it). From the lab, their secret base situated in a disused section of the London Underground, they acted on behalf of the Galactic Federation — an alliance of telepathic peoples — to protect Earth from a variety of threats, both alien and terrestrial. Committed pacifists, they were unable to kill, relying instead on their ingenuity and the occasional stun-gun. There were a total of nine Tomorrow People throughout the eight-season run (1973-1979) as well as TIM, their biotronic computer, who oversaw the lab and was able to tap into official sources to provide information as and when required.

The Beginning

Roger Price was an experienced TV writer who began his career at ATV (now Central) scripting comedy and variety shows. After moving to Granada he took up directing, and it was whilst working on a documentary series there that he met the late Dr Christopher Evans, a scientist working at the National Physical Laboratory in Middlesex. Evans had just edited a book on man's psychic abilities, *The Mind in Chains,* which provided the impetus for the TOMORROW PEOPLE format, and Price immediately hired him as the show's adviser, a position he was to hold throughout its run.

The idea was offered to Granada and promptly rejected, but Thames took it on after being persuaded that it could be made to work. Price was keen to keep artistic control and planned to write, produce and direct the thirteen episodes which would make up the first series, but Thames decided more experienced hands were also needed and drafted in Ruth Boswell as script editor (a position she had previously held on ATV's TIMESLIP) and co-producer. Brian Finch, an established TV dramatist, was commissioned to help Price get the scripts into shape, as Finch recalls with some misgivings, "My experience on that show was hardly a happy one, I'm afraid. Suffice to say that it was my first experience of collaboration — and one that I have never had any desire to repeat. I was invited to work on developing Roger Price's original concept by Lewis Rudd, Controller of Programming at Thames, who had seen and apparently liked a serial I had written for the BBC called CHINESE PUZZLE."

Despite Ruth Boswell's two-year stint on TIMESLIP, neither she nor Price had had much practical experience in bringing a complex science-fiction series to the screen and the heavy emphasis on special effects was outside the scope of Thames' childrens department, so the team approached Paul Bernard, a freelance director who had recently finished work on DOCTOR WHO's *Frontier in Space*. He had spent the early years of his career as a scenic designer with ABC, working on ARMCHAIR THEATRE and numerous episodes of the Ian Hendry/Honor Blackman AVENGERS series. After training on the BBC Director's course (alongside Ridley Scott) he worked on an impressive range of shows including Z-CARS before turning freelance.

Auditioning then began for the four lead characters. The first season introduced John, a seventeen year-old inventor of 'independent means' (and unofficially the Tomorrow People's leader); Carol, aged sixteen; Kenny, a young black boy; and Stephen, a schoolboy whose breaking out was to form the basis of the first story. Although in his twenties, Nicholas Young impressed Price and Bernard with his ideas for John and won the role, whilst Stephen Salmon (Kenny) and Peter Vaughan-Clarke (Stephen) had both been involved with children's workshops at Thames. Carol was eventually narrowed down to two actresses: Sammie Winmill (Nurse Crumpton in the DOCTOR AT LARGE series) and Lynne Fredericks, who later married Peter Sellers and David Frost and who was also the daughter of the show's casting director. Paul Bernard held out for Winmill and eventually won. The voice of TIM had been decided at an early stage and went to Philip Gilbert, a Canadian actor and veteran of countless British films of the fifties and sixties.

Paul Bernard drafted in freelance composer Dudley Simpson with whom he had worked on WHO to provide the show's haunting theme music. Simpson was paid a one-off fee for his work, but provided several variations of it to be used as incidental music throughout the early episodes. Paul Bernard also devised the visuals for the opening title sequence, which consisted of abstract and disturbing black and white images rushing towards the screen — a foetus, an unclenching fist and starscapes were among the shots interwoven with the faces of the four regular cast. Tony Bulley, the show's graphic artist, was responsible for realising the final visuals.

Harry Clarke, a Thames staff designer who had previously worked on ace of wands, created the Tomorrow People's underground lab which was to become the focus for much of the action for the first five seasons. The lab was dominated by TIM, which consisted of four semi-spheres mounted on the ceiling and a mass of interconnected tubes and screens. There was also a jaunting pad and various tables, chairs and beds. Wired multi-coloured lighting effects, created by Louis Bottone, completed the desired effect.

Season 1

The first story to enter production on Sunday, 1st April 1973, was *The Slaves of Jedikiah*, a five parter which introduced the Tomorrow People to their recurring enemy, Jedikiah, a shape-shifting robot played by Denis Quilley, who was intent on harnessing their psychic powers to fuel his crippled spacecraft. Philip Gilbert recalls: "In the beginning the special effects were much more elaborate than they later became. The very first recording was so complicated that we only got nine minutes in the can, much to the outrage of the powers-that-be at Thames! As the series went on, however, the effects became less and the studio was able to cope."

Although THE TOMORROW PEOPLE is often derided for its shabby special effects, this was not always the case, particularly in the early days. Paul Bernard, having worked on WHO was able to compare the finances for the two shows: "In some ways the budget was better than DOCTOR WHO, more to spend on locations and props, for instance, but the BBC had such a vast storeroom of scenery and costumes to fall back on, whereas Thames had nothing in that field, meaning you had to start from scratch. It was a very exhausting time. No-one at Teddington had worked on a special effects programme of that calibre, and it was a struggle to get the results that one wanted."

"Roger was involved at all stages," he recalls. "My job was to bring to life a very fertile imagination. Sometimes his ideas were wild, but sometimes I thought I could make them work, and as the year

The Slaves of Jedikiah introduced us to Carol (Sammie Winmill), Kenny (Stephen Salmon) and John (Nicholas Young)

progressed he learned a lot of tricks himself. When I left he felt confident that he could carry on where I left off."

Price is more blunt in his memories of their working relationship: "Perhaps our expectations of [Paul] were too high. We had 'creative differences' and he decided to pursue 'other interests'."

However, the fact remains that of the three stories which made up the first season, popular opinion places Bernard's two outings head-and-shoulders above Price's four part *The Medusa Strain* which he both wrote and directed. Bernard's last offering for the series, *The Vanishing Earth*, closed season one by placing the Tomorrow People in a difficult situation, unable to intervene as the Earth is rocked by a series of natural disasters, fearing that their secret powers will be discovered. Behind the chaos is Spidron (John Woodnutt) an alien on the run from The Galactic Police (led by Kevin Stoney).

The first season premiered on ITV on Monday 30th April, 1973 in a regular 4.45pm slot, and apart from a one week break after episode four, ran straight through until July 30th. Reaction was favourable and a second season was commissioned, but radical changes were occurring behind the scenes. After the aformentioned differences Brian Finch and Paul Bernard decided to move on. Finch went on to achieve great success in TV scriptwriting and today he is working on STAR KIDS, a new fantasy series he has developed for Granada, while Paul Bernard remained briefly at Thames before moving into cinema. Today he is a successful artist, runs his own theatre and production companies, and still finds time for freelance directing.

Sammie Winmill left to pursue theatre work while Stephen Salmon was another victim of "creative differences" with Roger Price, and both Carol and Kenny were quickly dispatched to the Galactic Federation (Carol having conveniently fallen in love with an 'Adonesian Councillor').

Season 2

Ruth Boswell took over the production as well as continuing as Script Editor, allowing Price more time for writing and directing. A new Tomorrow Person was found by a Thames casting agent in the shape of 23 year-old Sierra Leonan actress Liz Adare, as Elizabeth Umnondo, a student teacher at Stephen's school.

Two semi-regular characters in Season 1 had been Ginge and Lefty, bikers who were originally in league with Jedikiah before realising the error of their ways. Michael Standing, who played Ginge was contracted for the second season, but due to a motorbike accident on location for the first story, *The Blue and the Green*, Price was forced to quickly rewrite the scripts and introduced Chris Harding, Ginge's brother, played by Chris Chittell, late of FREEWHEELERS. Since the character was apparently known to the Tomorrow People, very few changes to the script were eventually required.

Elizabeth (Elizabeth Adare), Stephen (Peter Vaughn-Clarke) and John (Nicholas Young)

The Blue and the Green is generally seen as the highpoint of the original series, by both the cast and the fans. The plot concerns a classmate of Stephen's, Robert, whose painting of an alien landscape in Elizabeth's art class has the unnerving ability to suddenly switch from fine to stormy weather and with these changes come inexplicably violent mood swings amongst his fellow pupils. When Robert introduces coloured badges to the school, he succeeds in dividing his classmates into two factions, blues and greens, and the violence escalates …

Elizabeth Adare was to prove a popular addition to the cast and continued Roger Price's policy of creating ethnic characters for the show: "I insist that the powers of the Tomorrow People are not limited to the white race," he says. Adare was also aware that her character was becoming something of a role model for young blacks, which greatly influenced her decision to stay with the series to the end.

The following four-parter, *A Rift in Time*, took the Tomorrow People to ancient Rome, and the second season wrapped up with *The Doomsday Men.* It was during this story that Price's penchant for humour began to emerge, comic scenes such as Chris's van jaunting into space to rescue an astronaut and distracting scenes with a bemused traffic warden, but these were only the tip of the iceberg…

The thirteen episodes comprising the second season were completed within three months after which the cast took an eight month break before shooting recommenced in October 1974. The future of THE TOMORROW PEOPLE was never a foregone conclusion and the cast would often have only a few weeks notice before filming began on a new series.

Season 3

The new season introduced a new Tomorrow Person, Tyso Boswell, a young gypsy boy who debuted in the four-part *Secret Weapon.* The part went to eleven-year old Dean Lawrence, who recalls: "Roger and I discussed how poachers would move soundlessly through bracken, and that's the way I tried to portray Tyso. He was the only one of the Tomorrow People who could kill, but that was something which he eventually grew out of later."

It was whilst on location for *Secret Weapon* that the production suffered another set-back — Lawrence injured his knee, and the Tomorrow People's already established powers of self-healing meant that the injury could not be accommodated into the script. Recording dates were rapidly reworked. The opening two episodes were recorded as planned, then the following three-parter, *Worlds Away* was hastily pulled forward in the schedules. Since the story revolved around the Tomorrow People losing their special powers (a plot device which was to surface with monotonous regularity), Lawrence's injury was easier to accommodate. The final two episodes of *Secret Weapon* were finally recorded in late December 1974 — the only occasion in the show's history when episodes were not recorded in transmission order.

Several semi-regular characters appeared in *Secret Weapon*; Professor Cawston (played by Bryan Stanion) was a psychic researcher who had previously been seen in Season 2's *A Rift in Time* and Tricia Conway (Ann Curthoys), was introduced as an assistant to Col. Masters (Trevor Bannister) in a government department set up to investigate extra-sensory powers and their possible advantages for British defence. With her own undeveloped telepathic abilities, Tricia was immediately portrayed as a potential Tomorrow Person, although this was not fully explored until her eventual return in the season's finale.

Finally, Roger Price and Ruth Boswell, impressed by Philip Gilbert's sense of humour, created for him the role of Timus, a semi-comic cloned ambassador from the Galactic Federation, who debuted in *Worlds Away.* Timus' clone, Tikno, was also to make impromptu appearances throughout the series.

The penultimate story of Season 3, *A Man For Emily*, is perhaps best remembered for all the wrong reasons. Peter Davison's views on this, his TV debut, are well-documented: "It's the worst thing I've ever done. We were encouraged to play up the silliness, which is probably why it never took off in the same way as DOCTOR WHO." Davison and wife-to-be Sandra Dickinson (whom he met on the show) guested as Elmer and Emily, aliens from a woman-dominated society aboard an Earthbound ship ruled by 'the Momma'. The plot concerned Momma's quest for a 'man-boy' for Emily, and John is the one she eventually chooses. The entire production is a fiasco, a non-stop runaround with Davison roaming London in silver briefs and blond wig only to be repeatedly pulled in by the police.

The season concluded with the return of Francis de Wolff for a final confrontation in *The Revenge of Jedikiah.* Price's growing lack of interest in the show invariably resulted in his killing off the main characters in the final story of each season, but Ruth Boswell would always rework the scripts to keep the ending open for THE TOMORROW PEOPLE's possible return. Likewise *The Revenge of Jedikiah* ended with the Tomorrow People heading for the Galactic Trig, leaving TIM alone in a darkened lab. Whether Price decided against resurrecting the character of Tricia is unknown, but certainly Ann Curthoys was also busy with more challenging TV drama at the time.

Season 4

One of the other projects which was keeping Price busy was the childrens' variety show YOU MUST BE JOKING, also for Thames, which featured 14 year old Mike Holoway and his group Flintlock, whom Price had discovered playing in an Eastend club on one of his regular talent-spotting trips, and he immediately began promoting the boy as a star of the future.

The fourth series was to consist of only seven episodes, as opposed to the thirteen of previous years. Although Price wrote the three-part opener *One Law*, he was too busy with YOU MUST BE JOKING and his latest show PAULINE'S PEOPLE (starring Pauline Quirke) to concentrate on other scripts, so John Watkins was drafted in to write a second and final four-part story, *Into the Unknown.* Although a more than adequate story, albeit totally studio-bound, Price was unhappy with the results and vowed that no other writer would again tamper with his creation.

One Law, first screened in January 1976, introduced Holoway as Mike Bell, a young cockney tearaway whose ability to open locks with his telekinetic powers was being abused by local thugs. The inclusion of Holoway in the series undoubtedly gave it a boost when its fortunes might otherwise have flagged, but with Peter Vaughan Clarke and Dean Lawrence still amongst the cast, the lab was beginning to look decidedly overcrowded, and the reduced episode count also created problems. As a result, Tyso and Stephen were written out at the end of the run, again dispatched to the ever-convenient Galactic Trig. Dean Lawrence, whose appearances that season had been few and far between due to a mix-up over his availability, recalls: "It wasn't my decision to move on, but when I saw the way THE TOMORROW PEOPLE was heading I had no regrets at all."

Ruth Boswell had given up producing the series after the third season to work on other childrens' projects for Thames, but she continued as the show's script editor. Price himself briefly took over the production chores before handing over to the late Vic Hughes, who had previously directed two stories a year earlier, and he continued as producer until the show's eventual demise.

Season 5

The fifth season began recording in late November 1976 with THE TOMORROW PEOPLE now reduced to a regular cast of three. The episode count was further reduced to six episodes (three two-parters) due to inflation-crippling production costs and Price's ongoing commitments with other projects. Location filming was becoming an expensive luxury, and the growing dependence on cramped studios was all-too-obvious. However, the show was still able to come up with the occasional quality script.

The first story, *The Dirtiest Business*, featured Anulka Dubinska as Pavla, a young telepathic Russian girl on the run from the KGB in London. The Tomorrow People's efforts to help her bring them into contact with the Secret Intelligence Service, who raid the lab itself.

An intergalactic trip to the planet Gallia for *A Much Needed Holiday* was followed by the season finale, *The Heart of Sogguth*, which featured Mike Holoway's band Flintlock whose music was being used by a religious sect to summon up the Devil. Recording finished on 23rd December 1976 after which Elizabeth Adare temporarily left the show to have her first child, Kibibi, due early the following year.

Season 6

Shortly after season five had been televised, recording began on the sixth series in May 1977. Elizabeth's temporary replacement was to be a young Japanese girl, Hsui Tai, but casting the part posed a problem, due to the lack of suitable oriental actresses. Blackpool based Japanese actress Misako Koba eventually landed her first professional acting engagement, although her poor English was to cause problems for other actors in the programme.

Another headache for the production team was a fire in the Thames warehouse shortly before filming commenced which destroyed the original sets for the lab. Designer David Richens, who had worked on the previous season, was called upon at short notice to revamp the lab with less than a week before the two-part *The Lost Gods* went into the studio. Reconstructing the complex original set would have been time consuming and heavy on the budget. Instead Richens came up with a much-criticised design which resembled a doctor's waiting room. Overlit and decorated in bright yellow, the new lab consisted of potted plants and comfy chairs, with TIM relegated to little more than a table-top. The original and much-emulated jaunting belts, which boosted jaunting abilities over long distances, were also replaced by wrist bands.

When filming got underway, Elizabeth Adare returned briefly to provide a linking scene for the lab's monitor, on which she reports on her progress at the Galactic Trig. Work then began on *Hitler's Last Secret*, featuring Michael Sheard as the reanimated Fuhrer and a young Nicholas Lyndhurst as a member of the Hitler youth in an unmemorable story about Hitler apparently awaking in the 1970's after being kept frozen in suspended animation and eventually being unmasked as an alien criminal.

Filming then took a break until September by which time Price had scripted another four two-parters. Although he claims to have had no problems thinking up new storylines, by his own admission many of them were becoming 'dreary'. The first of these *The Thargon Menace*, which closed the sixth season comes close to *A Man for Emily* in its sheer awfulness. Directed by Peter Yolland (who went on to tackle THE SOOTY SHOW) it involved dire model work, terrible acting, and a supposedly wacky, cringe-inducing puppet who acted as the aliens' on-board computer. The dictates of Price's scripts were also impossible to successfully realise in the small Thames studios — for instance, that particular story called for an alien spacecraft to land in the jungles of a South Sea island. By December 1977, after nearly a year in production, the three stories were finally completed, and scheduled to run from May 1978.

John (Nicholas Young) confronts Blitz (Ray Burdis) and Mike (Mike Holoway) in *Hitler's Last Secret*

Season 7

Filming on the seventh season then continued directly on from *The Thargon Menace* with Liz Adare rejoining the cast. Also introduced was another new Tomorrow Person, this time a young Scottish boy Andrew Forbes, played by Nigel Rhodes, in a story set in Loch Ness called *Castle of Fear*, with location filming just outside London being shared by the follow-up story, *Achilles Heel*. Stanley Bates, better known as Bungle in RAINBOW made an embarrassing appearance as an alien pilot in the latter adventure, complete with black nose and whiskers — another triumph for the Thames make-up department! *Living Skins* rounded off the seventh season with a strange two-part tale concerning alien balloons trying to dominate the Earth with new, fashionable 'bubbleskin jumpsuits' which enslave the human mind.

Season 8

Season six had finished transmission in mid-June 1978, and after a short break the seventh season returned in October for a further six-week run. By this point the cast had just finished work on what turned out to be the last season (eight) a single four-parter called *War of the Empires*. An ambitious story, this saw the Earth being used as a potential battleground between two warring races, the Thargons and the Sorsens, while the Tomorrow People attempted to mediate alongside a powerless US President (played by John F Parker). A nice touch to round off the series was the final unveiling of the Galactic Federation, who were portrayed as bumbling, bureaucratic idiots. Two months after the final episode of season seven finished airing, *War of the Empires* was transmitted from January 29th to February 19th, 1979.

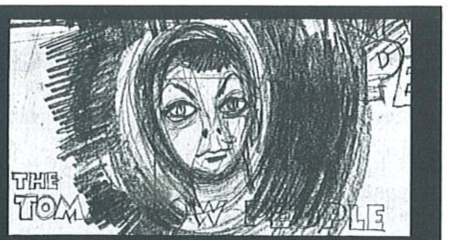
Roger Price submitted one final script before emigrating to America, and Thames were all set to go into the studio with it, but the prolonged ITV strike meant that studio days were lost, and with a large backlog of shows in the run up to the Christmas period the ninth season was quietly dropped.

For the cast, the regular TV exposure did nothing for their subsequent careers. Nicholas Young fared reasonably well, with a few roles in more prestigious TV drama before he quit the business to become a full-time theatrical agent. Stephen Salmon left for a job with the GPO. Sammie Winmill continued in acting until the late seventies, returning only last year, and is now based in Nottingham. Peter Vaughan Clarke had only a couple of parts on TV after being dropped from the show, but is still on Equity's books and works occasionally, as does Nigel Rhodes. Elizabeth Adare moved on to youth and community work and plans to retire at fifty to combine freelance psychotherapy with acting. Dean Lawrence and Mike Holoway are still in the business, and Misako Koba, finding other roles hard to come by, quit acting altogether.

Finally, Philip Gilbert went back to the theatre, appeared in HOWARDS' WAY and *Superman 3* and is today Head of Drama at the Prince Regent Theatre School in Farnborough, Hants. He also takes on occasional theatre work, and has attended several TOMORROW PEOPLE conventions.

Although all sixty-eight episodes of the show still reside in the Thames archives in their original two-inch video format, they have never been repeated since 1980 (although the show has surfaced in the Midlands on cable TV). However, it has already been established that the new BBC/Thames joint satellite venture, UK Gold, will draw heavily from both company's archives, so it's not inconceivable that the original TOMORROW PEOPLE could soon be entertaining a whole new generation of fans twenty years on.

● Many thanks to the original production crew quoted above, particularly to Paul Bernard, whose help and detailed memories proved invaluable in researching this article. An interview with Nicholas Young appeared in DWB 101.



episode guide

Above: an early 'doodle' ©Paul Bernard. Story descriptions are provided here where none appear in the main article. All episodes written by Roger Price except where indicated.

Season One (30 April – 30 July 1973)

The Slaves of Jedikiah by Brian Finch and Roger Price
5 episodes; directed by Paul Bernard

The Medusa Strain by Brian Finch and Roger Price
4 episodes; directed by Roger Price

The Vanishing Earth by Brian Finch and Roger Price
4 episodes; directed by Paul Bernard

Season Two (4 February – 6 May 1974)

The Blue and the Green
5 episodes; directed by Roger Price

A Rift in Time
4 episodes; directed by Roger Price
A time meddler is tampering with Earth's past.

The Doomsday Men
4 episodes; directed by Roger Price
A secret society threatens to devastate the world with nuclear power.

Season Three (26 Februrary – 21 May 1975)

Secret Weapon
4 episodes; directed by Stan Woodward

Worlds Away
3 episodes; directed by Dennis Kirkland and Vic Hughes

A Man for Emily
3 episodes; directed Stan Woodward

The Revenge of Jedikiah
3 episodes; directed by Vic Hughes

Season Four (28 January – 10 March 1976)

One Law
3 episodes; directed by Leon Thau

Into the Unknown by Jon Watkins
4 episodes; directed by Roger Price
The Tomorrow People respond to a stricken spaceship's SOS.

Season Five (28 February – 4 April 1977)

The Dirtiest Business
2 episodes; directed by Vic Hughes

A Much Needed Holiday
2 episodes; directed by Richard Mervyn

The Heart of Sogguth
2 episodes; directed by Vic Hughes

Season Six (15 May – 26 June 1978)

The Lost Gods
2 episodes; directed by Peter Webb
The Tomorrow People find a new addition to their number in the Far East ...

Hitler's Last Secret
2 episodes; directed by Leon Thau

The Thargon Menace
2 episodes; directed by Peter Yolland
From space a mad despot threatens to destroy the world ...

Season Seven (9 October–13 November 1978)

Castle of Fear
2 episodes; directed by Vic Hughes

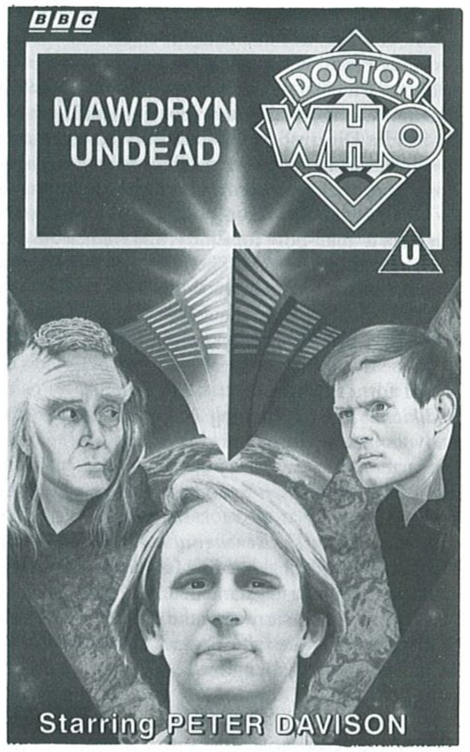
Achilles Heel
2 episodes; directed by Vic Hughes
A powerless Tomorrow People have ten minutes to prevent Armageddon.

The Living Skins
2 episodes; directed by Stan Woodward

Season Eight (29 January – 19 February 1979)

War of the Empires
4 episodes; directed by Vic Hughes

Can this be death?



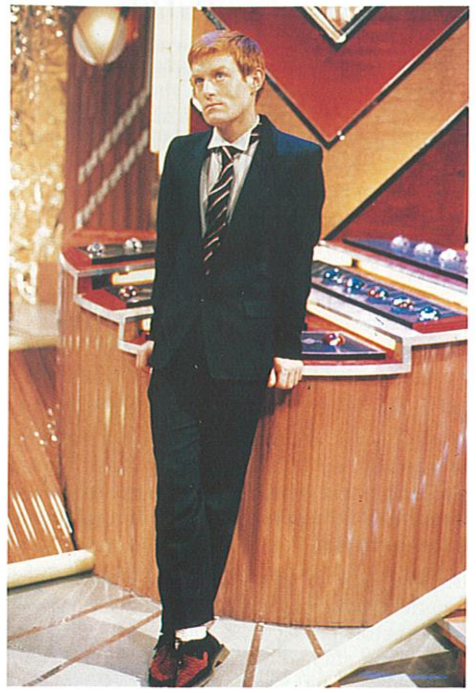
Mawdryn Undead
BBCV 4874; £10.99

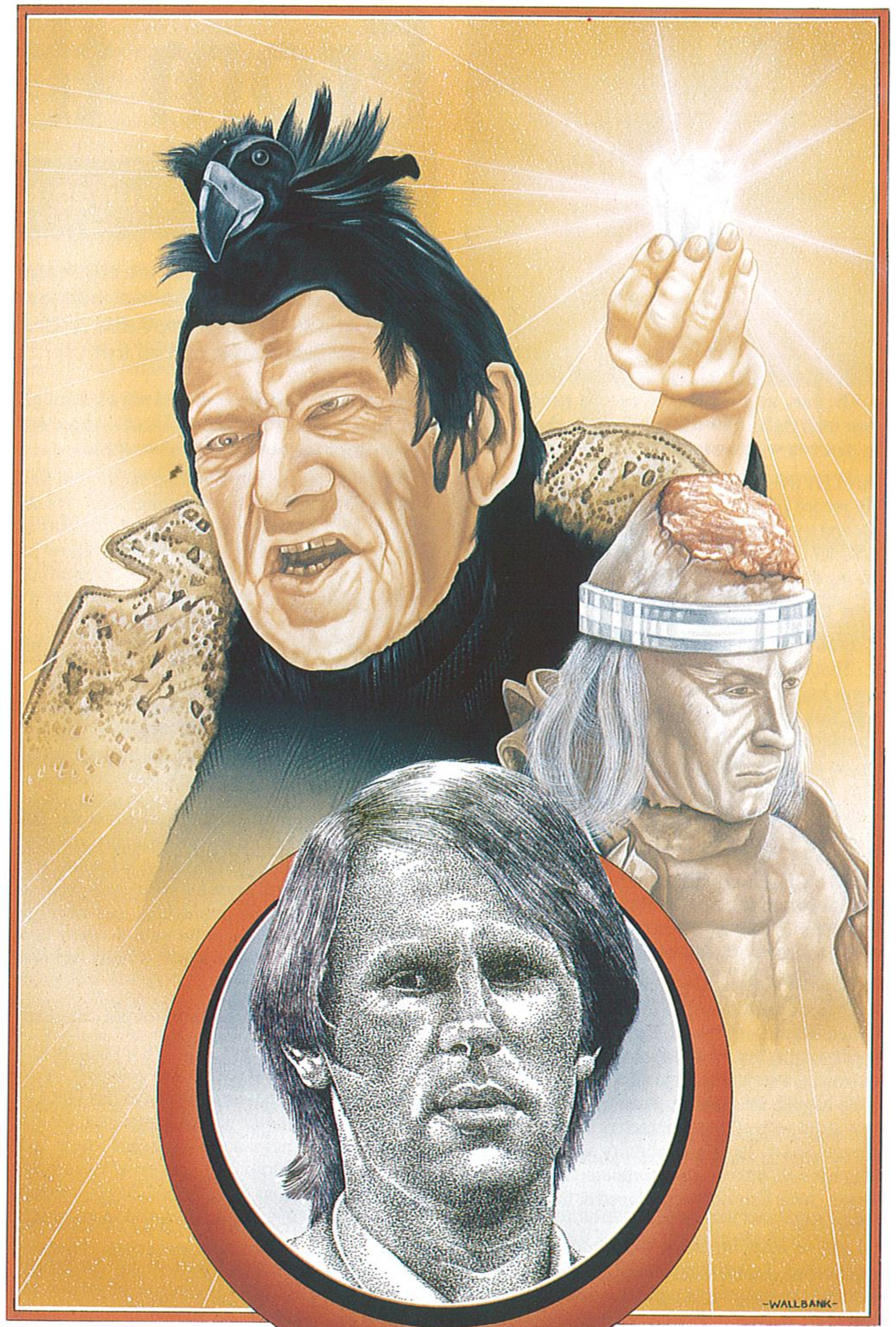
MAWDRYN UNDEAD is a story which, like *Spearhead from Space*, took upon itself to introduce a number of diverse elements in a short space of time. (Interesting phrase that.) A new companion, the return of an old companion; a new enemy, the return of an old enemy. On this level the story cannot be said to have been particularly successful.

In the first place the Guardian umbrella-theme has a disconnected quality lacking in the Key to Time season and foreshadowing *The Trial of a Time Lord*. We are presented with a number of largely autonomous stories in the quieter/duller moments of which a Black Guardian-inspired attempt will be made on the Doctor's life. The close-knit correspondence between overarching quest and individual stories characteristic of the Graham Williams season is not really there, or at any rate not until *Enlightenment*.

Then too, the whole concept of the Guardians, for which Williams must take responsibility, is at bottom pretty useless in its clumsy Manicheanism, more reminiscent of STAR TREK sententiousness than anything else. *Mawdryn*, though, saw the first full exposure of a Guardian on screen. Apart from lacking even such a galumphing stab at originality as attempted by *The Ribos Operation*'s treatment of Cyril Luckham, Valentine Dyall's portrayal was, to say it politely, rhetorically inappropriate. What remains is a very hammy performance in a very silly costume.

Locking into the Guardian segment of *Mawdryn* is the debut of Turlough. From the first scene with Ibbotson, Mark Strickson gave a performance of cheerful yet soured malevolence that boded well: a volatile mixture of alien arrogance and youthful insecurity, both qualities blending well at the moment of his encounter with the Guardian and captitulation to the latter's plan. Regrettably, it was not to last and Turlough very quickly became the first in the long line of brilliant concepts marred through lack of sustained development that characterised most of the latter JNT stories. It's always irritating when laziness ruins a good idea and looking at *Mawdryn* in retrospect one can see the seeds of future decline as Turlough doesn't really do anything nearly as memorable as his generally-delineated character — the dark days of *The King's Demons* are dawning already, a situation not to be remedied until *Planet of Fire* — his exit! It's significant that the only *Mawdryn* Turlough scenes that stick in the mind are his early tauntings of Hippo — fun to watch, but not exactly the sinews of plot.





What of the sinews of plot? What exactly was the essential and necessary connection between the Brigadier's '77/'83 business and the Mawdryn strand — apart from the convenient *deus ex machina* of "Zap"? Is what we have here simply "accidental" plotting posing as "substantial" plot?

The tragedy of it all was that fascinating concepts were bubbling beneath the distracting surface of those smooth flashy sets. Perhaps here is the link: the nature of experienced time. Both the Brig and the Mutants are living in an unending present, one without a past, the others with an infinite future. Grimwade quotes *Der Fliegende Holländer* in his novelisation, and Mawdryn's crew fit the *echt* Wagnerian pattern of wanderers chained to the wheel of existence, seeking the nirvanic bliss of death, attaining their goal through the compassionate self-renunciation of another (here provided by the Doctor's selflessness). As in *Brain of Morbius*, "death is the price we pay for progress" — not progress as conceived as banal social meliorism but an advancement to a state of personal authenticity. Mawdryn and his crew have no future (in *existential* terms) because their merely *temporal* future is hellishly unlimited by death, and as such is denied the possibility of being conceived as a whole. No death — no future, no future — no meaning.

Yes, interesting concepts all. And who better than a Time Lord to deal with them? *Mawdryn Undead* could have been one of the few stories (*Day of the Daleks* is another) to take DOCTOR WHO's central premise as something more than a means of getting from one story-location to the next. So why do we have to bury it all under four episodes' worth of blather about timelines, homing beacons and warp-elipses, which is too boring and boringly presented anyway to be of much value as escapist entertainment? One recalls Chris Bailey's raging against the suffocating ubiquity of SF jargon in WHO.

Mawdryn must be said to fail, not as a positively bad story but as one which didn't seize the chance to be particularly good. Ultimately its potentialities are dissolved in cutout spaceships pasted onto CSO scanners, thunderous incidental music to accompany Davison trotting along a short corridor, a charred body manifestly not the Doctor to everyone except his companions, a silly salt-cellar with a light-bulb, and the Black Guardian's pukey vortex. Such an inconclusive melange is typical of the 20th season which, with the glorious exceptions of *Snakedance*, resolutely failed to sparkle.

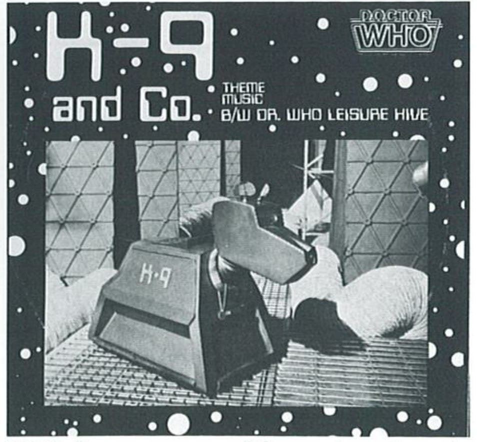
But I suppose one mustn't grumble overmuch. It was nice to see Tegan's Mara-misery carried on into the early scenes of this story, a touch which helped create a very early-Hartnellish sense of family continuity between the stories; Courtney and Strickson were, as mentioned, sterling presences; and Davison is always worth watching. Yes, one always tends to forget how long ago the Davison stories were, how good they could be at times, how that diamond was dropped down the drain of post-*Androzani*. To get most of this review's criticisms in perspective, think of them as applying from a 1983 viewing vantage-point, set against the previous decades. At the present moment, in the light of what was to come, *Mawdryn Undead*, Black Guardian and all, is well worth watching again — as a reminder of happier times. **(7)**

Ian Levy

From the Inside

Behind the scenes of Doctor Who: 1980-85

Part two of our exclusive interview with **Ian Levine** and **Eric Saward** — script consultant and script editor respectively on Doctor Who in the early eighties — which provides a telling account of the behind-the-scenes controversies of that turbulent period in the programme's history.



DWB: Ian, as a successful record producer in your own right, how did you find the time to also be DOCTOR WHO script consultant?

IAN LEVINE: I don't know, I had to find the time. My record producing had been very active in the 70s and was on a sort of low until 1983, so between 1980-83 I wasn't doing much in the day-time, just DJ-ing at night.

How did you get the theme music for *K9 & Company*?

IL: That was a fiasco in itself. As a record producer it was basically a job for the boys. John wanted a lush, fast, orchestrated theme like HART TO HART, so I produced it and Fiachra Trench arranged it. We did an electronic demo with synthesizers to show what the string and bass and horn part should be which John gave to Peter Howell to realise. But, instead of creating string and bass parts out of the electronics, Peter copied note for note the sounds we used so it ended up like some cheap electronic instrumental instead of an orchestrated theme! But John didn't care to correct it so I immediately decided that that would be the first and last time.

ERIC SAWARD: It was around this time that John was panicking because Adric was the only character he had left to carry over to Peter Davison. It didn't occur to him that if an ongoing and long-running series can take the change of a leading character quite happily in its stride, it can certainly pick up a new story with all new characters in, but John was determined to have a continuity aspect which is why not one, but two new companions, Nyssa and Tegan, were hurriedly introduced at the end of the Baker era.

Later on Mark Strickson was a good actor but he was wasted. I wanted to develop Turlough because I thought he had a lot of potential, but again I never had time to do him justice because I was always dealing with massive rewrites.

IL: Kamelion was one of the few occasions when John actually listened and accepted criticism because everyone was saying "John, you can't possibly want another K9 on your hands — DOCTOR WHO doesn't need these silly, gimmicky, mechanical things". In the end the thing only got used in its farewell story (a scene shot with Kamelion for *The Awakening* was never used).

ES: John was vainly trying to compete with all the big SF movies which spent millions getting the things to look good. Obviously, because of DOCTOR WHO's limited budget, K9 and Kamelion were never very satisfying.

IL: Eric, why was John so keen to get you to replace Anthony Root?

ES: Because Anthony had junked a script intended for Season 19. He'd also had terrible forebodings about *Four to Doomsday*, and John obviously realised that Anthony was not going to cope with poor scripts. That said, if Anthony had stayed, he might have been more successful than I because he would have insisted on junking more poor stories.

IL: In 1982, when Eric and Jane Judge, the then production secretary, started dating, John was absolutely livid and told me that one of them would have to go because he couldn't possibly allow his script editor and his secretary to be 'conspiring' together against him, when of course they weren't. Jane left of her own accord anyway, but isn't it funny how, ten years later, they still live together happily!

'John revelled in leaking false information to the fans'

What was Nathan-Turner's policy on revealing news of forthcoming seasons?

IL: John was absolutely paranoid about the fans finding out news before he had 'officially' revealed it, and he revelled in leaking false information to them. He had a board up on his office wall detailing the stories currently in production, and when the DWAS executive came in he used to write false titles, like 'The Doctor's Wife', to find out how things got out.

Did Nathan-Turner take notice of fan criticism?

IL: At the beginning, yes. The fan feeling he took on board from his first season was generally "some interesting ideas", but he ignored the fact that a lot of people didn't like the new title sequence, the new style electronic music and Tom Baker's new 'uniform' which was originally conceived as a motley collection of clothes (floppy hat, baggy trousers and a scarf);not a precisely designed maroon caricature of it!

The continuity which I worked into the scripts always got praised and of course he loved that and took all of the credit for it, but it went too far eventually. In Season 20 he hadn't actually realised, until I pointed it out to him, that there was a recurring element from the show's past in every story. It wasn't by intent, but he seized upon this fact and came up with the great press ploy for the 20th anniversary and blew it up out of all proportion. No wonder the fans subsequently felt cheated because they were hoping for an old monster in every story — Omega, the Mara, a Black Guardian trilogy and Anthony Ainley hardly constituted that!

Whenever John brought an old monster back he always had to redo them his way, to make them look more glitzy. To my mind he never improved on the original versions, and in most cases — such as with the Silurians and Sea Devils — they looked awful in comparison. The first Cyberman story (*Earthshock*) was okay, because although they were too glittering and bobbly Peter Grimwade at least knew that they had to be seven feet tall and he cast very tall actors to play them. Nobody briefed Peter Moffat when he came to direct *The Five Doctors* and he didn't even care to research them, and although David Banks returned he also hired 5'5" Cybermen — it looked like 'Cyberdaddy and his Cyberkids'! The incident which most proved Peter Moffat's incapability as a WHO director was his realisation of a scene written for *The Five Doctors* where Sarah falls over a cliff and is hanging on for dear life and the Doctor throws a rope to her. The script described it as a precipice with Sarah looking down all giddy, but in Moffat's realisation it's a four foot slope off the side of a road! There was no attempt to even find a ridge, let alone a cliff!

Everyone had been saying to John "You've got to have a classic director for *The Five Doctors*".

ES: He actually met the director of the first story, Waris Hussein, and asked him if he was interested in directing the 20th anniversary story. Waris didn't reply, yet we waited weeks and weeks and weeks until John eventually had to accept that he wasn't interested.

IL: Just prior to production he asked Douglas Camfield, who was outraged: "You ask me two weeks before production? Obviously I'm choice 29!" Soon after, John came up to me and said, gloatingly, "I told you we'd have an established director who's directed lots of WHO before — Peter Moffat's doing it!" He was trying to cover up his own ineptitude by raving about the fact that he'd got Peter Moffat, as though he had been his first choice and how happy he was that he'd got him to direct *The Five Doctors*!! Terrance Dicks had come up with a great script and a joyous celebration of 20 years, and I think it deserved much better.

Saying that, there was a brilliantly directed cliffhanger in *State of Decay* with the bats.

ES: Those were David Attenborough's bats! Shortly after I'd joined the production team, I viewed *State of Decay* and I said to Peter, "I love the bats, very impressive, lets get a lot of the equivalent of that in *The Visitation*", and he said, "Oh, the bats are courtesy of Mr Attenborough — the editor managed to work that in", so it wasn't actually any of his doing!

IL: Peter's directing I think gradually deteriorated, and had reached rock bottom by *The Two Doctors*. I mean, what director worth his salt would introduce the Sontarans in an inconsequential long shot! Robert Holmes' stories suffered particularly badly after *The Caves of Androzani*, and after we left the directors got even worse. *The Mysterious Planet* was the worst abomination and butchering of a Robert Holmes DOCTOR WHO story imaginable.

ES: Nick Mallett always seemed more concerned with being out of the door by 5.15pm sharp. I used to see the dust as he whooshed down to the exit!

IL: Even allowing for Peter Grimwade, as great as he was, Graeme Harper was the only director in the whole of the 80s who was in the same league as Douglas Camfield. To John, if a camera was pointing at the actors and they spoke their lines, that was good enough.

On the subject of *The Five Doctors*, Eric had persuaded John to allow Robert Holmes back to write it and Robert planned to bring Sutekh back as the villain, but he couldn't handle writing for all these Doctors so in the end it didn't come together.

ES: Perhaps understandably Robert was a little bit arrogant when he came into the office for the first time for *The Five Doctors*, but with having so many other problems and trying to bring this guy back because I knew he had style and was good, I felt I couldn't cope with someone (a) who wasn't prepared to be very co-operative, and (b) who was not prepared to produce a storyline beforehand, although he wanted to do another one.

Was Nathan-Turner openly aware of the faults within the series he was producing?

ES: From the day he went to the first play-back with David Read, Head of Series, John's attitude was never a very positive one. He never justified errors, he never defended much of what Read commented on, and by the time we later got to Jonathan Powell his attitude then was really of almost indifference. Having said that, he was highly critical of Jenny (Tasambeker) Tomasin in *Revelation of the Daleks* and her part was reduced in editing, but most of the time he wouldn't, or couldn't, acknowledge poor performances.

'I often dreaded the thought that one day Gary Downie would receive an associate producer's credit'

IL: As with most stories I'd seen *Planet of Fire* long before John allowed me to, and myself, Eric and Peter (Grimwade) had crucified Dallas (Howard) Adams' appalling, almost Thunderbird-like acting. When John and Gary Downie eventually asked me what I thought of it — up until then I couldn't criticise it because I wasn't supposed to have seen it! — I said that I thought Dallas Adams' acting was awful. John started pouting and shouting "Rubbish! Rubbish!", and Gary Downie turned around and said "What do you know, you don't know a thing about acting, you're a DJ!", which I thought was rich coming from a tap dancer! I often dreaded the thought that one day Gary Downie would receive an associate producer's credit on DOCTOR WHO because a lot of his influence rubbed off on John and some of his ideas, which were among the worst, were incorporated into the show.

Because of the rift caused by John, Peter was denied going to Lanzarote for the location filming, even though everyone else went — he hadn't even been allowed to recce the place to write it, Eric was sent there instead!

ES: I was never overwhelmed by Peter's abilities as a script writer, but I felt a sense of loyalty because he did such a good job on *Earthshock*. I was hoping that if I could keep him around, John might relent and use him again as a director. But *Planet of Fire* was the last straw. Peter was understandably angry with the way John had treated him and this showed in the script; it was so badly written. I remember one Sunday I spent the whole day on the phone trying to get him to write stage directions to make sense of what was happening in various scenes. Because I wasn't allowed to bring in more experienced writers, I was having to rewrite more and more of the scripts. By this stage I thought, in the case of Peter, I could not carry yet another inexperienced writer.

Ian, can you tell us about the extended versions you hold of most of the stories you were associated with?

IL: Again John was paranoid about people getting hold of the first director's cut (the "71 edits"). His brief to his directors was always "Cut loose, just edit all the scenes together as the script dictates", and then they'd look at it together and decide what scenes to cut. The more I got to see some of these edits (unbeknown to John), the more I realised it wasn't the directors who were making the final cut: it was John! *Mark of the Rani* was an example of where he preferred to keep in lots of pretty location footage at the expense of a key TARDIS scene at the beginning that explained what the Doctor and Peri were doing there in the first place!

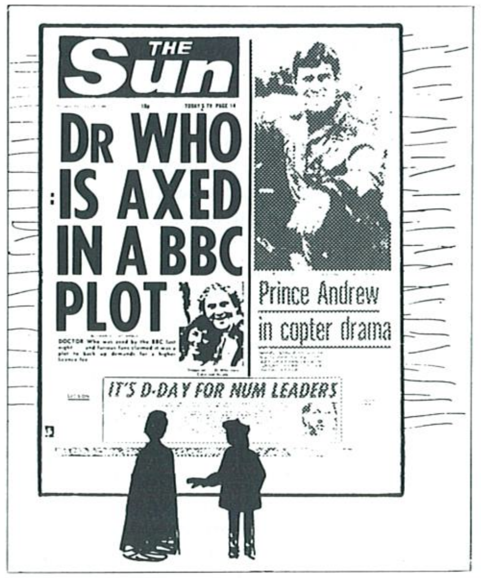
ES: I was furious that they'd left in these pointless scenic shots that were never scripted and were there at the expense of a not very brilliant story. In fact a necessary scene was dropped to make room for them, it was ridiculous!

IL: For *Arc of Infinity* part four they left in all of the Amsterdam location footage because John had spent so much money going there, and all of the key linking scenes on Gallifrey were pulled out to allow for this. The 71 edit ran to 32 minutes and the seven minutes taken out were all to the detriment of the story. You only have to look at many of the Sylvester McCoy stories to see that this hideously unprofessional policy of jeopardizing the story for superficial reasons continued, if not worsened, long after we'd gone, *Silver Nemesis* being the prime example. All that business with Dolores Gray was just so much tripe, but to John it was a major coup to get such a lavish film star on his show and he evidently didn't give a damn about how mindless the finished product would end up as a result. This reminds me of the time when John was called on to finish editing *Genesis of the Daleks* down from six to two 45 minute episodes for the 1982 repeat because the guy who had started editing it had to be carted away because he was blind drunk. The transmitted version just didn't hang together as a story.

ES: I've only ever seen this version, which is impossible to follow as a story because characters keep popping in all over the place.

IL: Even before that, when *Carnival of Monsters* was selected for repeating in 1981, John took it upon himself to edit out one of the final scenes because Peter (Pletrac) Halliday's skull cap join was showing. This was an old '73 classic that he was hacking away at!

But back to your original question, and as I said, John was utterly paranoid about anyone getting their hands on anything other than the final version, so much so that the minute an episode was cut to 25 minutes, he would immediately issue a destruction order for the original uncut version. With hindsight, of course, he has shot himself in the foot because he'd love this footage to make more extended releases, as he did with the six minutes for *The Curse of Fenric* which made it such a commercial success. Even though my copies have time coding, they'd still be an obvious selling point, and I'd gladly lend them to BBC Video if they asked me. I have most stories from that time in their original, uncut versions. For example, my *Vengeance on Varos* part one given to me by Ron Jones runs at 55 minutes and part two at 53, so there alone is 18 minutes of extra footage never seen, including a wonderful scene where Sil gets so angry with the Doctor that he blows his voice box! Peter Grimwade gave me *Kinda* part 1 which runs at 35 minutes, and for *Frontios* — also provided by Ron Jones — they had to take out scenes with a particular character all the way through because it was running so long. I said to Eric at the time, even though video was in its infancy, that they were worth keeping for posterity, but John lacked foresight and had this obsession with wiping every bit of footage other than the final cut.


THE Sun
DR WHO IS AXED IN A BBC PLOT
Prince Andrew in copter drama
IT'S D-DAY FOR NUM LEADERS

'Powell seemed to hate everything we were doing'

You were both around at the time of the '85 cancellation. Can you put into perspective, from the point of view of the DOCTOR WHO production office, exactly what happened?

IL: It wasn't Michael Grade that created the problem in the first place — it was Jonathan Powell. Before DOCTOR WHO was cancelled John was called to Powell's office where Powell proceeded to tear *The Two Doctors* to pieces. I saw this coming a few days before when Eric and John went to a play-back of *The Two Doctors* and Jonathan Powell was there slagging the thing off mercilessly.

ES: I can't remember him being any more negative about *The Two Doctors* than he was about everything else. John came back from Powell's office looking very sheepish and said, "We've been cancelled". As producer he was told before anybody else.

IL: Eric had actually said "I think we're going to be having problems with Jonathan Powell because he's getting very damning about the show".

ES: What truly aggravated me about it was that Powell was getting fraught without actually being constructive.

How was John taking this criticism from someone he was not in a position to shout down?

ES: He was very upset. Powell seemed to hate everything we were doing. John went to see Michael Grade soon after we were cancelled and Grade was apparently outraged by John's attitude and his demands to know why the show had been cancelled. The production team heard this via Grade's secretary.

IL: Apparently his choice of dress — an ill-fitting leather suit amid the suits and ties of the Sixth Floor — didn't help matters either! After I went on ITV's News At One when the cancellation had been announced it caused such an outcry that Bill Cotton personally phoned the DWAS and assured them that the show was coming back. John then thought he'd won and that he was invincible. What no-one knew, until now, is the fact that the day it was cancelled John and Gary came round to my house and spent the whole evening plotting what to do and how to get the press involved. John got me to phone Charles Catchpole of *The Sun*. He'd told me that there were codenames within the BBC that Catchpole would know, so I phoned him and said that I worked on the sixth floor under Michael Grade and that my name was Snowball. I said that there was a plot to get rid of DOCTOR WHO, and whilst I was talking John and Gary were busy scribbling away telling me what to say. I told Charles Catchpole how the show made profits for the BBC, how the series was being used in a plot to defend the licence fee increase — John was even reeling off figures off the top of his head of the number of countries DOCTOR WHO was sold to and the millions of pounds worth of figures for me to quote at him! John was pulling the strings all the way and used me because he couldn't risk being identified as being involved. He knew this whole code thing and exactly what to say, and then we did the same thing with Geoff Baker of *The Daily Star*. The next day *The Sun* dropped their front page headline for "DOCTOR WHO AXED IN BBC PLOT" and *The Star* started their own campaign. John knew the story of DOCTOR WHO being cancelled alone would not have made the front page, but by using the angle that the BBC was axing something popular to draw attention to their efforts to get the licence fee raised was extremely cunning and it worked! It was John's idea for me to smash up the TV set as well! This adverse publicity angered Michael Grade so much because it made him look like a complete idiot when really it was none of his doing, and he was accepting all of the wrath which should have been directed at Powell.

ES: Grade spent his day having to say "no" to many projects; he probably wasn't that committed to a 22-year-old series anyway.

IL: Grade wasn't that bothered about DOCTOR WHO, but he didn't hate it like Powell did. Grade told *The Independent* years later that, had it been left to him, he'd have rested it for a year and would have appointed a "firebrand new producer" to get it back on its feet. In reality, what happened was that due to the BBC being swamped with protest letters, Bill Cotton issued a statement to the press above Powell's head saying "DOCTOR WHO will be back on the rails bigger and better than ever". Powell was so pissed off at this because he wanted to be rid of the show and he was determined, as far as I can see, to do the complete opposite, which was why he left the exact same production team in, because a new approach had been promised, and of course he effectively increased and halved the episode count at the same time. Whether Powell cynically knew then that John would ultimately bury the programme into the ground or not, who knows, but the fact is that it limped on for only four more years with the same producer, getting worse and worse. At the DWASocial 5 at Hammersmith in April I went on stage following a showing of the News At One clip to a round of applause. I told the audience not to be complacent, to keep writing to the BBC, and although we'd lost a season the show was coming back, but don't think it's coming back as 26 episodes because it's not. JNT came on shortly afterwards and literally tore me to pieces and got a huge round of applause for saying, "The idiot that was on before, worrying you all and telling you all it's coming back as 14 episodes, it's all nonsense and I'm here to assure you that it's totally untrue and that no decision has been made about the episodes. Don't listen to him — he's winding you up with rubbish". I knew that John was lying through his teeth, so what does that tell you about his (lack of) respect for the fans? He didn't want the fans to know yet that the show was coming back as 14 episodes and so he shouted me down, and I was subsequently accused of "Hitler-esque ranting" in CT and the occasion likened to a Nuremberg Rally. John publicly humiliated me and later phoned me at home and said, "I hope you didn't take it personally, I had to humiliate you in public — *I* will decide when the fans know, not you. It's *my* choice, *my* show, and *I* will decide". After that I didn't speak to him for a while. For five years I'd been on the phone to him everyday and he'd been coming round to my house for drinks, and suddenly I was very distant and unpleasant towards him and he didn't like it, so he tried to find out why.

Some weeks later I was visiting my mother in Miami and John found my number there and phoned me up. He was very friendly and was trying to coax me over to a convention in New Orleans where he said he would have me met at the airport and made guest of honour (which wasn't really any big deal since he'd previously persuaded the organisers of these conventions to make people like Gary Downie and Sarah Lee, his secretary, guests of honour at these events!). So I went, and as well as John and Gary, Colin Baker and Nicholas Courtney were also there, and that was the only time in all those years where John ever admitted to any fans that I was his script consultant. He introduced me as "Ian Levine who has been working on the show advising me, and who also wrote the theme music to *K9 & Company*". He was trying his best to win back my friendship, but I was still furious with the way he'd made such a fool of me.

We went back to England but over the next couple of months things just started getting worse and worse. By this stage I had lost patience with him altogether and I certainly had no respect.

'I was in the position of watching John ruin the show that I loved from the inside'

IL: By 1985 I was far more critical of John than I was earlier because I hated what he was doing to the show and I was no longer blindly supporting it. I was in a unique position that no other fan had of watching John ruining the show that I loved, the whole thing, from the inside. The final straw came towards the end of that year when I heard he'd cast Bonnie Langford.

I phoned John at his new house in Brighton, which he used as his weekend retreat, and we started talking just niceties at first, and then I said, "John, you always ask me to keep you abreast of any rumours the fans are circulating. Well, I've heard the silliest, most preposterous rumour yet which of course I instantly dismissed out of hand because, knowing what a great and talented producer you are, I know you would never do anything so daft". I was perversely buttering him up to slap him in the face! I laughed and said, "No, it's too silly for words, forget it", and he said, "What is it, what is it?" but I carried on winding him up for a while, milking the situation for all it was worth because inside I was seething, but eventually I said, "It's this ridiculous rumour that you've actually gone and cast someone as incredibly unsuitable as Bonnie Langford as the new companion. You know as well as I do that there's no truth in it!" and he said, "Oh yes?! Who told you this?" I replied, "Why? It's such a silly rumour". He was getting very agitated by now, "Who told you, who told you?" and I said, "John don't be ridiculous, why would you want to know, it's such a funny rumour", and he pretended to laugh and replied, "Yes, it is, but who told you?" "You're starting to worry me, John. Wanting to know who told me seems more important than how silly the rumour is. Is there any truth in this?" And he bellowed, "Of course there isn't! Who told you?" and I said, "It's a silly rumour, it doesn't matter John, I'll see you around, goodbye", and put the phone down before he could say anything else.

About a week later he came to my new house in Ealing Common to see if I'd finished proofing his new book, *The Companions*. I had gone through his first book, *TARDIS Inside Out*, and made hundreds of changes to the wretched thing and hadn't even got a thankyou. He was not a writer and the thing was just so sloppy and factually inaccurate and it took me ages to amend it to a presentable state, and of course he took all the credit. For *The Companions* he'd asked me to do the same, but there were something like 30 mistakes on the first page alone so I gave up and had left it sitting around. So John arrived at my house a week after our telephone conversation and my housekeeper, Beverley, called up to let me know. I called back down, "He's not coming in this house", and instead I went down to see him standing on the doorstep and he asked, "can I come in?" I said, "no, I'm busy, here's your book, please take it away, I haven't got time to do it, goodbye", and I closed the door in his face, and that was the last time I ever saw him!

There is a saying that you can tread on a worm until it turns. For five years I had put up with so much humiliation from John Nathan-Turner, using me and treating me like a puppet as though he were some kind of superior being and I wasn't allowed to say boo to a goose, and here at last I was in a position to belittle him to his face, and it felt wonderful! Eric hated the way he saw John treating me in the same way that I despised how John treated Peter Grimwade. So many things happened over that five year period, and all this is just the tip of the iceberg. Maybe I'll write a definitive account of *everything* that happened "behind-the-scenes" on DOCTOR WHO between 1980-85 some day…

For all the rows and humiliation, John trusted me implicitly because during those five years I was on the show — every story from *The Leisure Hive* through to *Revelation of the Daleks* — I'd never leaked anything he'd told me in confidence. I kept my mouth shut about everything, and perhaps he naïvely assumed I would carry on doing so forever. In a way he succeeded in indoctrinating me with his "Don't you ever dare tell anyone" threats, which really has lasted to this day, and I've never let this out before now, seven years after I finally severed our association. Having done so, with the backing of various key personnel who individually witnessed most of the incidences I have outlined here, it feels like a great weight has at last been lifted from my shoulders. It's a story I believe had to be told eventually, and however it might taint anyone's pre-conceived knowledge of 80s DOCTOR WHO, it is all a part of the history and nothing will ever change that.

In 1988, three years after I parted company with him, Peter Haining wrote the book *25 Glorious Years*. In it was a chapter written by Jeremy Bentham about the missing episodes of DOCTOR WHO, in which my name was mentioned many times because of the large amount of episodes I had located (ref *DWB 103-104*). John, who had all power of veto over the book — as he did with all of the associated merchandise — struck out every mention of my name with his notorious blue pen. It was almost as if he was attempting to rewrite history and ignoring any contribution I had ever made.

Eric walked off the show in disgust soon after me, in early '86, leaving John Nathan-Turner to his own devices, hence Season 24 — the worst season in the whole of DOCTOR WHO's history, which saw Pip and Jane Baker writing the debut adventure of a new Doctor without a script editor. It is important to stress that I don't resent John Nathan-Turner personally, even though he walked all over me as a human being, but professionally for the fact that DOCTOR WHO is off the air with very little hope of it ever coming back, and it's largely all his doing. Yet perversely we are *still* indirectly paying his wages by buying his videos, audio tapes, inviting him to conventions and so on, as he continues to flit about from one DOCTOR WHO associated venture to the next, displaying the same contemptible attitude and ineptness outlined here. Will he ever let go…? ■

Blood and Fire

The Past is Prologue

The Next Generation's fifth season story *The Outcast* presented the first portrayal of homosexuality in Star Trek's 25 year history, but this was not the first time such a brave and welcome move was considered, as Kathleen Toth finds out.

STAR TREK is famous for boldly going where no one has gone before in television drama. The original series became known for Gene Roddenberry's insistence on having a multi-racial crew at a time when blacks were not cast as regulars in network television programming. Besides Nichelle Nichols, George Takei was also cast in a role which did not trade in any way upon racial stereotypes and Roddenberry charted a course in which contemporary taboos were ignored. He remained unbowed in the face of some NBC affiliates refusing to air an episode in which Kirk and Uhura engaged in a primetime interracial kiss. And in their midst was Spock, not only the product of an interspecies marriage but also preaching the alien philosophy of IDIC — respect for Infinite Diversity in Infinite Combination.

THE NEXT GENERATION has not had to deal with quite the same set of issues — no one any longer questions the wisdom of casting actors like Michael Dorn or Whoopi Goldberg in the series. However, new times make for new prejudices. While Roddenberry won new plaudits from the handicapped for having a blind character functioning as a valued member of the crew, he never overcame the charge that women are not truly equal in the TREK universe and at the time of his death the series had also yet to carry through on commitments to incorporate gay characters into the crew of the Enterprise. Gay rights organizations have lobbied the STAR TREK production offices for over a year seeking admittance to the tolerant world of the 24th century. These organizations were told last summer that an effort would be made to portray gays as members of the crew in the glimpses of life aboard ship that are seen at times in places like Ten Forward. Roddenberry argued that it would not be appropriate to base an entire episode on the issue of homophobia or treat homosexuality as a controversial subject because he believed that this is another flawed aspect of our society that would have vanished by the 24th century, along with racism.

The aborted season one story *Blood and Fire* was written because Roddenberry and Gerrold were approached about this very subject while THE NEXT GENERATION was still in the planning stages and Gene Roddenberry made much the same statement then that he did nearly five years later regarding how the subject should be handled. That the script was never used and indeed had some role to play in Gerrold's decision to leave his post with the new series, does not detract from its strengths. Gerrold has denied that he thinks the fact that there was a homosexual relationship in the script was the reason for his inability to get it accepted for the series. And indeed the relationship is portrayed as incidental to the main story and is never treated as controversial in the eyes of the rest of the crew. Rather, for Gerrold, the main point of the script was a comment on the treatment of Aids patients in our society and accompanying fears about contaminated blood supplies. In the hands of someone so familiar with the Roddenberry tradition of using STAR TREK as a vehicle to comment upon the moral flaws of our own time, *Blood and Fire* was a dramatically satisfying lesson on the stupidities of hatred flavoured with the first season tension in the Enterprise crew that derived from the complex relationship between Captain Picard and the Crusher family.

David Gerrold (front row, 4th from right) in his cameo in *Star Trek: The Motion Picture*

Blood and Fire — synopsis

The Enterprise responds to a distress call from a scientific research vessel, Copernicus, but the away team cannot find any signs of life on the bridge. They do, however, find a most unpleasant corpse lacking blood. When they do find a survivor, he begs them to kill him and takes his own life with one of their phasers when they refuse. They soon learn to their horror that the ship is infested with Regulian Bloodworms or plasmasites, creatures first discovered 150 years ago. There was no cure for their lethal infection and there is a standing order to destroy any ships that are contaminated. However, the planet where the bloodworms were found has been quarantined for years and the plague virtually unknown until now. That mystery is solved when 15 survivors from the crew of 123 are found protected behind a repulsar field in the cargo area. The team from the Enterprise cannot beam back to their ship because they are now infected too, but Picard orders them to be beamed into the secured area on the Copernicus as they are about to be overrun by the plasmasites. The survivors include the leaders of the mission, who claim they were given authorization to do research in the quarantine area because of a fear that the Ferengi might seek to use the bloodworms as a weapon against the Federation. They have learned that the bloodworms are attracted to certain oxygen-bearing enzymes in the blood but they have found no cure.

Beverly Crusher thinks that it may be possible to save the people trapped on the Copernicus, however. If their enzymes can be suppressed the bloodworms will die almost immediately but the medical staff will have to then beam each of them to the Enterprise for a complete blood replacement in less than ten minutes to save their lives. Captain Picard is momentarily relieved of the burden of having to order the destruction of the Copernicus, but he is far less happy to discover his CMO attempting to beam to the research ship without asking his permission. He pulls her off the transporter platform but she insists that she is the person best equipped to supervise the treatment of the survivors. Picard says that he can order her not to go as she is a sole-surviving parent, but that is not what is uppermost in his thoughts. He reluctantly yields to her professional ethics and then turns to the transporter officer, Mr Worf, who says that, speaking as a Klingon, he would suggest beating her.

Picard's dilemma is far from over. When he returns to the bridge, a crewman approaches him on behalf of some of the families aboard ship to request that he does not proceed with the rescue because of their fear of infection. Picard acidly informs him that this is not a democracy and that they are not going to abandon their crewmates. "And we're not throwing away half the human race because the other half is scared." Beverly is making unpleasant discoveries of her own — the researchers on the Copernicus tell her that there is no natural control on the plasmasites even in their native environment because they were actually engineered to be a doomsday weapon of war. Among the away team members trapped on the Copernicus are Eakins, a security officer, and Freeman, a medical technician. The two men have been matter-of-factly identified as having "been together" for two years.

Picard asks young Wesley Crusher to the bridge to monitor events, making the boy fear that he is only being nice because he has bad news for him. The Captain suddenly becomes aware how deep the gulf is that separates them. On the Copernicus, Freeman tells Eakins how much he worries about him being on security detail. Beverly's plan is put into operation and small numbers of infected personnel are injected with enzyme-suppressing drugs and then beamed to sick bay for blood replacement when the plasmasites are destroyed. The operation is working smoothly but it is a race against time because the plasmasites are breaking down the repulsar field. A crisis occurs when the Enterprise begins to run out of artificial blood. Donors will be needed to supply enough blood to save the last six crew members trapped on the Copernicus. Picard and Wesley forge something of a blood bond by being the first volunteers for this archaic process. As the last few humans struggle to maintain the defensive wall in the cargohold, Freeman argues that he will have to be the last to beam out as he must monitor the enzyme levels in Eakins and Riker. When they protest, he injects them before they can make any further attempt to deter him. After they are safely beamed out, he injects himself but the plasmasites break through and are on him before it is safe to transport him, leaving the Enterprise bridge stricken by the sounds of his death.

Now a safe way to destroy the ship must be found and there is no ready answer. The plasmasites are not destroyed by phaser fire and they are not satiated by feeding. In fact, Dr Crusher suspects that they have been mutated in some way to inhibit the natural course of their development. Picard, who had already been repelled by the militarism of the "research" mission, discovers that the leader of the mission actually intended to unleash the bloodworms on the Ferengi, whom he regards as a loathsome evil. He still intends to aim the Copernicus as a weapon at the Ferengi worlds, but is stopped by his associate. Wishing to make amends for all the lives that have been lost, the repentant scientist injects himself with a compound that Dr Crusher believes will restore the bloodworms to their natural lifecycle and demands to be transported to the Copernicus. His one way mission is a success. The bloodworms are transformed into a Sparkle-Dancer, legendary creatures of light that harmlessly dance and spin through the cosmos.

Blood and Fire was in the best traditions of STAR TREK's founding humanism and it can only be hoped that those who have inherited Gene Roddenberry's universe will continue to welcome the opportunity to comment upon the painful issues of our own time through the medium of science fiction. David Gerrold himself currently has no desire to reassociate himself with THE NEXT GENERATION or do any writing for television. He has, however, expressed an interest in submitting proposals for one or more STAR TREK novels, something which he has not done since the publication of his novelization of the first NEXT GENERATION story, *Encounter at Farpoint*. ■

Star Trek — the Next Generation

season five

19) The First Duty 4th April 1992

Written by Ronald Moore & Naren Shanker; Director Paul Lynch; Music Jay Chattaway; Visual Effects Supervisor Dan Curry

WIL WHEATON makes his second return visit of the season in an unusual story — it takes place on Earth and the boy genius finally gets into serious trouble.

The Enterprise is emirate to Earth where Captain Picard is to give this year's commencement address at Starfleet Academy. He is also looking forward to seeing Wesley Crusher, who will be participating in the ceremony with the Academy flight team. But ten hours out from Earth Picard is disturbed to receive a private message from Admiral Brand, the Academy Commandant. Wesley has been injured in a collision of the flight team's ships while practicing manoeuvres near Saturn. It falls to Picard to break the news to Dr Crusher and he tries to reassure her that although one cadet was killed, the other four managed an emergency beam out. Wesley suffered burns and a broken arm, but will be fine.

Admiral Brand decides that commencement will go forward but procedure requires an immediate formal investigation of the incident. Only one damaged flight recorder was recovered, however. Picard and Beverly go to Wesley's room and find him doing therapy on his arm. He seems very subdued and asks them to leave when Nick Locarno, leader of the flight team squadron, comes to see him. Locarno tells him they will be alright as long as they all stick together.

There is someone else that Picard wants to see. He finds Boothby, the Academy groundskeeper (see Final Mission, DWB 89) *fussing over a damaged flower bed. Picard tries to thank Boothby for helping him when he was at the Academy, but the groundskeeper says "I just made sure you listened to yourself."*

The inquiry starts with Locarno explaining what happened. The team was practicing for their precision flying demonstration when the collision occurred. The five ships were travelling at 80,000 kmh and moving to within 10 meters of each other to perform a Yaeger Loop when Josh Albert's ship hit another, starting a chain reaction. Both Cadets Sito and Hajar testify that they saw nothing that would explain the accident. When Admiral Brand is dissatisfied with their responses. Nick Locarno intervenes to say that Josh had been having difficulties lately and he probably got frightened and pulled out early. The relatives are present for the inquiry and Josh's father is visibly shaken by Locarno's statement. Admiral Brand is not pleased by what she calls a lack of judgement in continuing to let Josh fly.

The inquiry must still review the evidence from the flight recorder, but it is not yet ready. Picard is becoming concerned and asks Data and Geordi to review all the information as well. An unhappy flight team meets privately to discuss the situation. Wesley is very upset by what he calls lies. But Locarno says that the flight recorder has no data on the collision itself — if they don't volunteer any new information everything will be fine. Wesley's discomfort is increased by a visit with Josh's father, who tells him he's sorry his son let them down.

Picard (Patrick Stewart) and mentor Boothby (Ray Walston) in *The First Duty* © Paramount

Admiral Brand questions Wesley quite closely the next day about what position the ships were in when the collision occurred. She is dissatisfied with his statements and shows him why. A navigational control satellite happened to record the ships just seconds before the accident… and their position appears to contradict what Wesley has said. When the inquiry adjourns, Wesley warns his mother not to try to protect him. Picard summons Cadet Crusher to his ship for an emotional show-down …

Ashley Judd was supposed to return in this episode as well, keeping alive the flame lit in *The Game*, but she proved to be unavailable. Veteran character actor Ray Walston is Boothby, Picard's unorthodox mentor. Nick Locarno was played by Robert Duncan O'Neil, who brought a Kirk-like quality to the part of the charismatic team leader. Ed Lauter, who has played villains in countless television and film roles, is touching as Commander Albert. Starfleet Academy campus shots were filmed at the Sepulveda Dam site used several times before for outdoor shooting as in the episode *Justice*.

The production team had to walk a fine line between not having Wesley do something unforgivable and still implicate him in something serious enough to provoke a memorable confrontation with Picard and place his career in jeopardy. The episode is also another occasion for dropping tantalizing hints about unknown adventures in Captain Picard's past.

With this story Peter Allan Fields joined the staff as Executive Script consultant.

20) The Cost of Living 25th April 1992

Written by Peter Allan Fields; Director Winrich Kolbe; Music Dennis McCarthy; Visual Effects Supervisor Robert Legato

Mama Troi makes her annual commando raid on the Enterprise and decides to meddle in Worf's family problems.

The Enterprise is engaged in a disaster prevention. An asteroid from the Pelloris Field is on a collision course with an inhabited world. The ship manages to catch and pulverize it just in time. No one observes that a cloud of particles moves out of the debris and settles onto the hull.

Counsellor Troi has her hands full trying to resolve the latest crisis between Worf and his son. Each complains that the other never does what he is supposed to, so she suggests they draw up a contract specifying each person's responsibilities and rewards for jobs done. Although Worf is extremely sceptical about this solution, she assures them that children learn to appreciate their parents later in life. That seems doubtful in her own case, however. The unexpected news that her mother is arriving for a visit does not make her smile. She is still more surprised to learn that her mother is about to marry and expects to have the ceremony on the Enterprise. The final stunner is that her intended is an alien Ambassador whom she has never met. When the Worf household returns to Deanna bickering over their contract, Lwaxana is appalled at the whole concept and takes Alexander under her wing to teach him about enjoying life.

Captain Picard is uneasy, as always, to learn that Lwaxana is aboard and is outraged to learn that she expects to use his ship for her own convenience. But when Riker tells him that Mrs Troi wishes him to give the bride away, he smiles rather savagely and says that nothing would please him more.

Lwaxana rescues Alexander from an appointment with her daughter and takes him to the holodeck to show him the importance of spontaneity by visiting a colony of free thinkers — and partaking of her favourite mud baths. Deanna scolds her mother for interfering when she is trying to teach the child the value of responsibility — and also wants to know why her mother is not absorbed in plans for her wedding. She is shocked to learn that Lwaxana has agreed to wear a wedding gown the Ambassador has sent ahead for her. How can her mother, a champion of Betazoid culture, propose not to go naked to her own wedding? Lwaxana tries to explain to her about the necessity of compromise as one advances in years, and also complains that the food replicator is giving her sausages instead of the tea she ordered!

Data and Geordi receive over 200 reports of such malfunctions. When they try to trace the energy flows, they find a strange gelatinous substance in the conduits. The trouble spreads to key systems like helm control and they begin to think that something is acting like a corrosive agent on the ship's surfaces …

This episode was made more touching as Majel Barrett was appearing as the widowed Mrs Troi just a few months after the death of her husband, Gene Roddenberry. She also made her description of Lwaxana as "the Auntie Mame" of the galaxy particularly relevant as she tries to give motherless Alexander some "joyful wisdom" to counteract the dire presence of "Mr Woof". As Alexander, Brian Bonsall's lispy delivery continues to be rather annoying. Those who do not care for the domesticated Worf will find little to like here as the Klingon Warrior is driven to distraction like any sitcom father. The "B" plot of the metal attacking alien presence is one of the weakest seen all season and does not blend well with the rest of the story.

Tony Jay, Paracelsus in *Beauty and the Beast*, is Mrs Troi's stuffy bridegroom — which gives one a good idea that they will not make it to the altar. Carel Struycken returns once again as Mr Homm, but is given very little to do.

21) The Perfect Mate 2nd May 1992

Teleplay by Gary Perconte & Michael Piller; Story by Rene Echevarria & Gary Perconte; Director Cliff Bole; Music Jay Chattaway; Visual Effects Supervisor Dan Curry

This story was being debated in fan circles when it was still in script form and was fought over during production. Two endings were actually filmed, several others were talked about.

The ship is on a mission of peace. Two worlds, Krios and Vault Minor, have been at war for centuries. They now propose to end their conflict with a Ceremony of Reconciliation and ask the Federation to their worlds. But the ship is full of other strangers too, as the crew had to pick up some miners and then a Ferengi vessel sent a distress call. Its two crew members are plucked from the small ship just seconds before it explodes.

One of the requirements for the peace ceremony is that Geordi manage to recreate a particular ancient temple on the holodeck. The Ambassador from Krios, Briam, will have to assist with the fine details as they await the arrival of Alrik from Vault. Briam has also brought a special gift that is stored in a complex container in the cargo bay. Briam explains to Picard that the significance of the temple is that the war started here as two brothers were torn apart by their love for the same extraordinary woman.

One of the Ferengi disrupts their conversation by trying to discuss a trade agreement with the ambassador. This is merely a diversion to allow the other to enter the cargo bay and try to examine the special gift. He is startled by Worf and knocks the container over. Picard and company arrive in time to watch the virtual cocoon transform into a beautiful woman. She heads straight for Picard and announces, "I am for you," thinking he is Alrik. Riker and the Captain are outraged at the idea that their ship is being used to transport a sentient being as property. The woman, Kamala, is charmed at the idea that Picard is coming to her rescue, but she and Briam insist that her situation is not one of slavery. She is a rare creature, an empathic metamorph. Briam says that male metamorphs are rather common on Krios but Kamala is the first female one born in 100 years. She has the ability to sense what men want and what they need… and to change into that for them until she bonds with a mate and imprints his pattern for life. The war started when two brothers fought over such a woman and she will now become mated to Alrik to seal the reconciliation.

The Captain still finds this distasteful and asks if she does this by choice. She says "it is my sole purpose in life". That is hardly the end of the matter. When the Captain has his customary breakfast with Beverly Crusher the next morning she is outraged by Kamala's situation and berates Jean-Luc for being willing to deliver her into a life of virtual prostitution. Picard protests that arranged marriages have formed the basis of political alliances in many traditional cultures, including that of Earth, and the woman has indicated that this is her choice. The Doctor is not persuaded, pointing out that Kamala has been bred and conditioned from birth for just this role. As a final touch, she tells Picard that Briam has made the metamorph a virtual prisoner in her quarters, forbidding her to venture outside. This disturbs the Captain and he promises to look into the matter …

Many of the fans who expected to dislike this story actually found it to be rather charming if only because of the rare opportunity to see Picard actually smile and laugh as he falls under the spell cast by Kamala. There are also two highly effective breakfast scenes with the Captain and Dr Crusher which emphasized the sometimes overlooked closeness of their relationship and produced the memorable line, "may I take off the uniform".

Still, the sexist nature of the story was hotly debated and Patrick Stewart himself was highly displeased with the script, pressing for rewrites and still calling it "one of the most offensive scripts we have ever done". Kamala is played by relative unknown Famke Janssen, whose only touch of alien make-up is a sprinkling of freckles around her face and down her back in a manner recalling the mostly benign race in ALIEN NATION. Veteran actor Tim O'Conner, whose career spans PEYTON PLACE and BUCK ROGERS, is Ambassador Briam.

Kathleen Toth

Cost of Living © Paramount

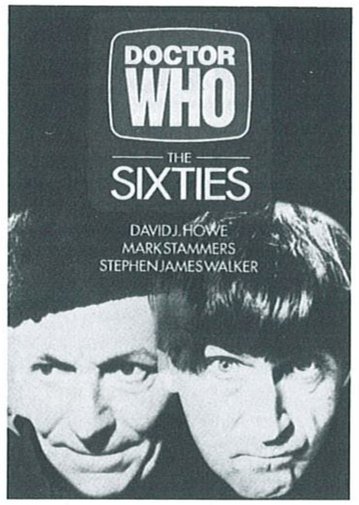
Doctor Who — The Sixties

by David J. Howe, Mark Stammers and Stephen James Walker

Virgin Books: £14.99

DOCTOR WHO — THE SIXTIES is the latest in the family tree known as the 'must buy', those books which push back the boundaries of what has been written before and set new trends and standards. In the footsteps of Malcolm Hulke and Terrance Dicks' The *Making of Doctor Who*, Peter Haining's *Doctor Who — A Celebration*, Jeremy Bentham's *Doctor Who — The Early Years* and David Banks' *Cybermen*, it is a delight to gaze upon for the first time and a tome that will be eagerly read and re-read for years to come.

If these reviews had to be very short indeed and *DWB* readers were not so discerning, I could save myself a lot of effort by simply putting "This is the best DOCTOR WHO book I have ever seen. Buy it!" However, *DWB* readers demand more, so here goes.



As a dedicated 'factophile', this book is a delight in its text and information. It is the best to date. However, it is not perfect — and if such a perfect volume ever was produced it would probably mean DWAS, Marvel, *DWB*, Virgin, et al all packing up and looking for new jobs. So why is it so good? Is it just because it's packed with juicy new facts (e.g. the unused Terry Nation historical tale)? Is it because it's written by three guys I respect for knowing about their subject? Well, a little of each maybe. But the selling points on this volume for me aren't necessarily these — I take those as read.

The book feels and looks like a quality work. The cover is a simple composite of the monochrome incarnations of our time travelling hero, topped by the original logo. No fancy artwork. Very little colour. This, we know from the start, is a serious work, a study of the development of a television series over the first seven years of it's life.

This is a reference work which is both a product for novice and expert. It is a full overview, looking at all the aspects of DOCTOR WHO in the silver decade. Not only are the stories and their production examined, but stage plays, movies, exhibitions and fandom are all covered — along with a staggering chapter on merchandise, a piece which shines with love and enthusiasm from David Howe's corner.

I may be giving the impression that this book is bulging with new behind-the-scenes stories and anecdotes. It does not bulge at the covers as such — although a slight bend is evident. To the hardened historian well read from his/her *Space and Times*, *Doctor Who Magazines*, *DWBs* and of course *The Frame*, much of the material will be familiar. What makes the difference here is the narrative flow as we follow the series developing through its initial six seasons. It is the first part of a multi-volume work, an adventure equally as fascinating as the ones the TARDIS lands its owner in. And like all good books, it is populated with good characters.

With the exception of certain people involved in Jeremy's *The Early Years* or contributing to some of Peter Haining's books, I can't say I've ever been given such a feel for the people involved in DOCTOR WHO's making. But here they are, entering and exiting the stage from left to right, and each with handy little biographies in the side margins at the appropriate point. No longer is Dennis Spooner just the man who wrote the funny ones, or Douglas Camfield the man who directed the good ones. Also the attempts to present an overview of the lives of both William Hartnell and Patrick Troughton exceed anything attempted before, and are beautifully illustrated.

The illustrations are another factor in the book's favour, again the layout being imbued with the look of professionalism. The photos are not cropped in a bizarre manner, nor placed at oblique angles to the pages in an attempt to capture the comic-style imagination of juveniles. This is a serious book, and hence photographs are selected and presented well, and also captioned as accurately and completely as space will allow. Of the 370 odd illustrations from the series, at least half of these were new to me, and others are frequently ones which have been relegated to fanzines instead of getting mass exposure courtesy of Marvel and Virgin.

Some of the photographic material will be familiar to regular patrons of *The Frame* (which is not at all surprising), and whilst some of the text treads the same ground, it is far from merely being 'The Best of The Frame'. Little in depth knowledge of DOCTOR WHO is needed for the reader to tackle the book as, like the original series, it educates and entertains with its story behind the story. The approach to looking at the stories is also something new and unique, and although not immediately to my taste does at least make a pleasant change from the usual episode guide. As opposed to taking a trip chronologically through each black-and-white escapade, the authors have opted for a more thematic approach to each overall season, often taking stories out of sequence and dovetailing effortlessly from one to another. It is indeed useful that for those less familiar with the order of stories that the side columns incorporate a table of serials for each season.

And here we come to one of the few factors that makes the book only slightly less than perfect. Whilst its 164 pages are written with a care and attention that alone make it a superb read, it is such a high quality reference work that one is left expecting several pages of appendices at the back giving all the facts and figures. Some such lists are hidden either within the text, or in the side columns (e.g. the recording dates and studios can be deduced). But so often one is tempted to wonder what else a certain person wrote, or when a certain episode went out, or who played so-and-so. It can only be presumed that this donkey work is left to the Jean Marc L'Officier books, which Virgin would assume the average reader to already have. That said, the book does score over Virgin/W.H. Allen's previous output by bothering to include a very useful index in its closing pages.

The fact that such information as commissioning dates, unused scripts, recording schedules and techniques, etc, etc are covered at such length is also something which — until now — has been a dream outside of the pages of 'specialist' fan publications and occasionally *Doctor Who Magazine*. As with the rest of the text, new information rubs shoulders with old anecdotes to give a full impression of the decade, and a single source which the reader can access instead of thumbing through their old files of fanzines or *DWMs*. Myths are exploded along the way with some vigour as our trio of intrepid authors embark upon their crusade to try and present "just the facts ma'am" in a style that Jack Webb would be proud of. They are unafraid to refer to Serial A throughout as *100,000 BC* instead of its more common name, although they do make the concession to naming Serial B *The Daleks* instead of *The Mutants* for the sake of clarity.

One trimming made to this finished product from the original manuscript is the deletion of the full storyline for *The Curse of the Daleks*, presumably due to the fact that the already increased page-count was still too low to cram everything in. For me, this is not a bad thing, for the synopses in both *The Frame* and *DWB* have shown it to be more of a curio than a classic, and to have devoted more room to it would have been out of proportion to the series itself. The material on the two Aaru movies is very nice and makes particularly good use of the colour pages that are liberally placed throughout the book.

Colour is also very much to the fore in the aforementioned merchandise section. Over fifty shots depict nearly all the items listed in the chapter with a very thorough overview of both the collectable and the daft objects to have either DOCTOR WHO or Daleks or a TARDIS plastered over them twixt '64 and '69. Now here is your chance to see pieces of plastic and cardboard which would cost thousands to buy from a Comic Mart; two versions of *Doctor Who's Anti-Dalek Jet Immobiliser*, the picture sleeve for *I'm Gonna Spend My Christmas With a Dalek*, a family of technicolour Mechanoids, the legendary Dalek plastic jar and a group shot of no less than 32 toy Daleks (probably more than the BBC have ever had!). Regrettably there is no picture of one of the rarest pieces of merchandise licensed of which only twelve were ever issued … but you'll have to read the book to learn about that one.

Other little gems along the journey include what William Hartnell did after leaving DOCTOR WHO, Mervyn Pinfield's work on *Galaxy 4*, John Wiles' response to *The Celestial Toymaker*, rewrites on *The Power of the Daleks*, casting for *The Evil of the Daleks*, working titles for *The Tomb of the Cybermen* … and numerous other odds and ends.

I find myself going back on my word at last. Yes, as a dedicated 'factophile', this is the best DOCTOR WHO book I have ever seen. Buy it! **(10)**

Andrew Pixley

Blake's 7's finest hour

GOLD is not only a crap song by Spandau Ballet, it is also one of BLAKE'S SEVEN'S finest episodes. It epitomises all that the show should have consistently been, combining action and sly wit, adventure with a touch of farce (more of Paul Darrow later).

Gold is a great episode because the crew not only get to do what they do best, but also get to show other sides to their characters and do something a little different. They also foreshadow the end of the series, with their reactions to Avon and Soolin's 'deaths'. This is an episode which contains many elements: Avon gets to smile and commit fraud and theft on a grand scale whilst treating Soolin as an equal, Soolin continues to be given the chance to think, Vila shows both caution and a touch of menace in his dealings with Keiller and Servalan gets to swan in and steal the last few scenes in a manner she was not allowed to do in *Blake*. And what of Tarrant and Dayna? Well, Tarrant continues to be in good sorts after finally getting his leg over in *Sand* and Dayna grips the prospect of drug addiction firmly in both hands.

The story line is basically 'the Great Train Robbery' in space. Avon is contacted by his old friend Keiller (Roy Kinnear) who offers them a plan to steal billions in gold from the pleasure cruiser of which he is the purser. The plan is so full of twists and turns that you know it's going to fall apart around their ears. Which of course it does, leaving Keiller unconscious and Avon and Soolin thought dead. Vila, Dayna and Tarrant get to show their affections for their dead comrades by menacing Keiller. The lack of trust they show towards him is counterpointed nicely with a hint of pessimism from Vila that put him in good stead for the last three episodes of the season. Avon and Soolin aren't dead of course, merely using their deaths as an opportunity to snoop around without arousing suspicion. Whilst they're doing this, they obviously can't be bothered to inform the others that they haven't kicked the bucket. Having found out something new about Keiller, Soolin and Avon gate crash their own wake and take command again. Now the plan is back on track leading to a desolate planet and a meeting with the real mastermind — Servalan. Avon resists the temptation to shoot her and take the consequences, but only just. The gold is exchanged for some booty and everyone lives happily ever after… well Servalan does any way. Avon makes another big mistake by accepting a currency even the TSB would say no to, and Servalan has beaten them again. This leads to a great end scene, where Soolin attacks Avon for risking their necks to make Servalan rich. This signals Paul Darrow's most manic laugh yet!

The episode is full of great touches by the actors, the production crew and the director. Paul Darrow and Glynis Barber get to play up to each other incessantly. Michael Keating gets to act harder than before, showing wariness towards Keiller (a good thief never trusts another good thief) — constantly looking for the double cross. Darrow also gets to stare meaningfully at Tarrant following a verbal shoot out about Servalan, the implication of which is "you might have bonked her, but I know her better than you". Director Brian Lighthill gets a good performance out of Steven Pacey and adds a sense of pace to Colin Davis' fine script.

Despite Paul Darrow's usual scene stealing (the docking tube disengaging is classic Darrow) it is Roy Kinnear who controls the action with a great performance. Acting with unrestrained panache at the start, fumbling through a plan that is evidently not his own and by the end looking worried sick. Keiller's letchery towards Soolin is well expressed, so too is his fear following her 'death'. He also shows Keiller's darker side well when shooting the doctor at point blank range with the words "see pretty one, I can shoot too!"

In series such as BLAKE'S SEVEN which rely so heavily on its characters for its success, episodes like this will always be fondly remembered, no matter which season they come from. That *Gold* came in the fourth series is a minor miracle which should be appreciated.

(9.5 out of 10 — taking 0.5 off because this is season 4 after all!)

ORBIT is a different kettle of fish. A small story with large ideas, fantastic lines and good ol' love, truth and passion. Robert Holmes' final script for BLAKE'S SEVEN is one you either loved or hated. I must admit to not being very enthusiastic about it for a long time. Not my cup of tea (perhaps there were too many fish in the teapot as well). Having not watched it in over six years however, my view has now changed radically. How could I have missed so much! This is Holmes at his best, emphasising the crew in a way that no one else could, giving them 'attitude'.

If there is one problem with Robert Holmes and BLAKE'S SEVEN, then it is this — he would have preferred it if he was working on "Avon's Two". His great strength was his understanding of Avon and Vila (shown not only in *Orbit*, but also in *Gambit*). This goes a long way to explaining why *Traitor* didn't quite make the grade — Tarrant was too obvious for him and no one ever got the character of Dayna to work. Considering Holmes' love for their characters it is little wonder that Paul Darrow and Michael Keating always knew that they were onto a winner! Holmes' love for oddball characters is also evident here. Egrorian and Pinder adding to his long list of well rounded double acts.

Contacted by renegade scientist Egrorian, Avon takes the Scorpio's crew to the back of beyond in search of a new weapon against the Federation. Avon is nothing if not a self protecting git however, and easily succumbs to Tarrant's suggestion that this is a job for someone with curly hair and much whiter teeth (frolicking with Ms S has obviously made him very gung ho or perhaps just suicidal). Vila makes the mistake of having a sly dig at Avon by saying he'll keep with Avon "where it's safe". This backfires when Egrorian will only parley face to face with Avon, who takes Vila along as his assistant.

Egrorian displays his new toy with obvious glee (ably assisted by the dazzling Pinder). A destructive power known as the tachyon funnel (basically your average every day death star beam). A deal is struck where Avon gets the funnel, the galaxy and a time share flat in Ibiza in exchange for Orac and Avon's patronising patronage when he is ruler of the universe. Whilst Vila dreams of his Royal regiment of 1,000 hand picked virgins, Avon correctly surmises that Servalan is behind all this. Enter Servalan stage left, setting Egrorian's tail awagging. His love for her is so damn sincere that you feel sorry for the berk. Perhaps it is not just her, but also the idea of taming a powerful woman that appeals so much (if so this is not the way to go about it!).

Avon returns in the shuttle and hands over Orac then quickly does a runner with the funnel. There is a good reason for this. He got his double cross in first, giving Egrorian a decoy Orac. Unfortunately, Egrorian got his double cross first-first, having already sabotaged their flight home. The real Orac is on the shuttle, waiting to be recovered after the crash. In an effort to gain more lift, the shuttle is stripped of all fixtures and fittings. The tachyon funnel is also sacrificed. This brings them tantalisingly close to escape velocity. They only need another 70 kilos. Orac (possibly foreseeing a point where he gets offered a unique opportunity to try to out think gravity) helpfully reminds Avon that Vila has not yet gone on that diet he said he really didn't need. Gun in hand, Avon forces himself to stalk the scampering Vila. Watching this part of the episode again, Darrow is convincingly ambiguous. You really don't know if he could go through with this or not. As it is, Vila hides well enough to stay out of his pursuers way and Avon finds the real problem — a speck of neutron material that Pinder found whilst spring cleaning. Having dumped this, Avon steers them back home.

Meanwhile, Pinder has overheard Servalan convince Egrorian that he isn't necessary any more and kills them both in a fit of pique. Back on the Scorpio again, Avon and Vila do not confront each other openly. Although we know Vila isn't going to forget in a hurry.

So what's it all about? Principally, devotion. Pinder is devoted to Egrorian. Egrorian is devoted to Servalan. Servalan is devoted to power. The crew of the Scorpio show through their powerless frustration their devotion to their comrades. And Avon and Vila test their devotion for each other. Good friends are often called upon to make decisions which will affect their friendship. Mostly it is whether or not to tell them that their taste in clothes stinks. Sometimes it gets very heavy and the whole basis of a relationship, the devotion that the two friends have for each other is brought into question. Many friendships take years to sort out after this. Some can't be. Vila and Avon are hurt by the experience. Especially Avon who adds a new weight to his feelings of guilt. Vila has feelings of betrayal to gain strength from (as he seems to show in *Warlord*). Avon only has feelings that diminish him.

Here's a question for you. If you were Avon walking into a trap, would you take Vila to cover your back? Well actually, yes! Tarrant is more likely to start a fight rather than finish one. Dayna would be too naive to spot a subtle ploy and Soolin has a ruthless streak which would have Avon keeping one eye on Egrorian and one eye on her (Soolin and Avon in that shuttle. Now that would have been interesting). Vila is the best choice, if for no other reason than he has a highly developed instinct for survival.

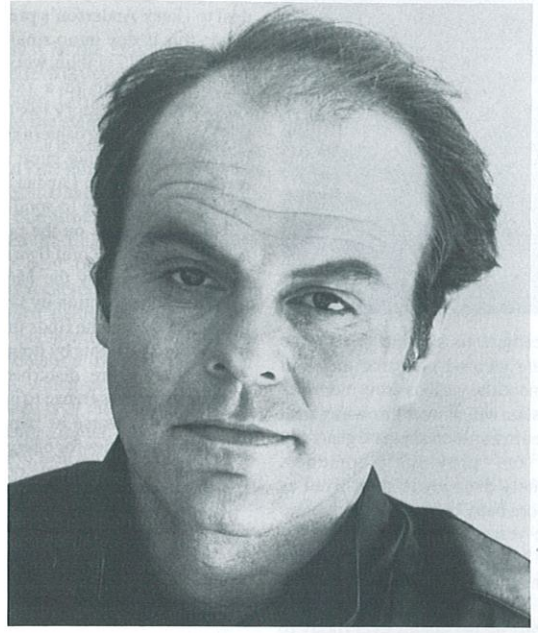
Here's another one. Why did Avon have a 'contingency' Orac? There is one quite devious answer. Avon may have still been looking for a way out of the crew, but knew that Tarrant wouldn't let him walk off with Orac — hence a copy to use as a bargaining chip.

A word about the direction. Great. Following on from his success in *Gold*, Brian Lighthill again gets a good performance out of Steven Pacey and manages to keep Paul Darrow under control. In fact Darrow nicely underplays most of the action, leaving the script to speak for itself. My only regret is that the now infamous Gazza scene, in which Vila openly cries, was cut because it was felt that was going to far. This really makes you appreciate Robert Holmes' contribution to BLAKE'S SEVEN. **(9)**

Jason Haigh-Ellery

Blake's 7 tape 25 — Gold/Orbit — will be released by BBC Video on December 7th.

V for Variable



Michael Ironside as Ham Tyler

'V' tapes 4-6
Warner Brothers; £10.99 each

THE THIRD batch of V tapes gets off to an uninspired start with *The Overlord*. In the hills above the front line, where the Red Dust bacteria still flourishes (and is therefore lethal to Visitors) lies a Cobalt mine, whose product is essential to a massive Visitor offensive. Diana has therefore struck a deal with collaborators who are using the people of a nearby town as slave labour to mine the cobalt. Until, that is, one of the slaves escapes to seek help from the IA resistance…

The Overlord is routine and predictable. I don't think I'm really giving much away by saying theat the resistance are being used as pawns in a power struggle within the collaborators, and I'm definitely not giving anything away by revealing that Elias falls in love with the escaped slave… Why else would they have cast a black woman after all (the first to have a major part in the series), unless they were planning a romance for the resistance's token black? Rather racist, really.

There is one vaguely interesting touch towards the end of the episode when Diana guns down one of her aides, on the grounds that "someone has to take the blame for this operation's failure". Otherwise, *The Overlord* has little merit. (4)

A Reflection in Terror, by contrast, sees the series taking a definate turn for the better. The plot is an obvious one — Diana, obtaining a blood sample from Elizabeth, clones the starchild — but it's surprisingly well done, continually toying with the cliches before sidestepping them. The clone's rapid growth is credible considering the speed of Elizabeth's own development, and continuity's maintained through the use of the same child actress senn in *The Final Battle* and *Liberation Day*.

A Reflection in Terror is also both the Christmas episode (and a reasonably effective contrast is drawn between the festive season and the realities of the war), and the "Isn't America Wonderful?" episode apparently obligatory in US series. When compared with STAR TREK's *The Omega Glory* though the scene in question is rather effective, partly because it's a rip-off of *Casablanca*'s duelling anthems sequence, but mostly because it's actually integral to the plot. As a result of her little display of patriotism, Nathan Bates finally gets proof that Julie Parrish is still working with the resistance, and the sequence which follows has an effectively hard-edged quality which culminates in a genuinely explosive cliffhanger that sets the tone for the next few episodes… (7)

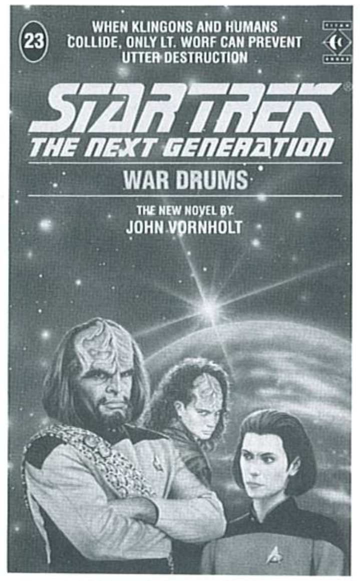
The Conversion sees the return of Lydia, and the arrival of Duncan Regehr's effectively mannered portrayal of Charles, the new Visitor commander. Picking up on some effective character development in the last episode, he begins his tenure by attempting to brainwash the captured Ham Tyler, and by choosing the most interesting and best acted character in the series he does the episode an immense favour. By this episode, V was firing on a majority, at least, of its cylinders (though there are still some embarrassingly unfunny comic sequences, generally concerning the Visitor's dietry habits), and the whole thing builds very nicely to a gripping climax which, again, sees major developments in the series' plot. If they'd all been this good, then the series would still be running today. (9)

The Hero though is even better. This one's in my 'Desert Island Videos' list — it's as good as V could ever have got. What humour there is is kept well under control and in its place — well away from the resistance who are instead presented as a hard and ruthless band held together by necessity, not choice. For once, they're faced with a realistically disturbing dilema — whether to surrender themselves, or allow a band of hostages (including Robin) to be executed day by day. Carleton Eastlake's script (as you'd expect from the man who, during his time on THE EQUALISER, introduced some genuinely interesting moral ambiguities into the series' vigilante antics) concentrates on the characters, and is all the better for it, but still manages to explain away a number of problems in the series' concept, and Andrew Davison manages to make you genuinely care about hostage John Langley so that the episode's conclusion is all the more effective. I won't give it away as *The Hero* contains a number of shocks, and they make it a real edge of the seat episode on first viewing, though it loses none of its appeal when rewatched. If the series had maintained this approach throughout, then it would be remembered as the HILL STREET BLUES of telefantasy, and for that reason I'm giving it a … (10)

Betrayal is effectively *The Hero*, part two, which makes it difficult to give a synopsis, but it's largely concerned with preparations for the collapse of the open city agreement made by both sides, and with the battle to save a wounded Willie's life. Though good, it's not up to the standard of *The Hero* and features some dodgy bits of production (such as the stock shots of Willie running away used in the teaser — note how his jacket changes!) and some major holes in the plot. One of these may however be corrected on the video release, if Warner Brothers reinstate a scene cut for timing reasons by NBC, in which Nathan Bates passes his 'pulse-monitor' bracelet onto his son Kyle. This explains why the Red Dust tanks don't explode, contaminating Los Angeles, when Bates senior dies — an important plot point, you might have thought… Despite such faults, *Betrayal*'s a very enjoyable episode, which includes some nice dialogue and some decent acting, particularly in the otherwise jarring final scene which abruptly writes out half the regular characters. Watching this it is all too obvious which of the cast can actually act… (8)

Unfortunately, Michael Ironside's departure cost the series more than just its best actor — he'd also been a consistently positive force behind the scenes, leading cast revolts against corner-cutting and dud scripts. Bearing this in mind, it's perhaps not surprising that the series collapsed so quickly, but, coming after such a decent run of episodes, *The Rescue* is doubly disappointing. It should have been one hell of an episode — with the open city agreement gone, Los Angeles lay open to an all out Visitor attack. But the invasion is quickly reduced to a cliched stand-off as Julie attempts to deliver a baby under siege, while the episode concentrates on Charles and Diana's shotgun marriage aboard the Mothership (not, thankfully, in St Paul's…). This is the episode which saw the series reduced to the level of (not very) high camp, and if it's worth watching at all, it's for the hilariously poor production — the towel which Diana apparently wears while taking a bath is almost as funny as the appalling dialogue, which has to be heard to be believed! (1)

Anthony Brown


23
WHEN KLINGONS AND HUMANS COLLIDE, ONLY LT. WORF CAN PREVENT UTTER DESTRUCTION
STAR TREK
THE NEXT GENERATION
WAR DRUMS
THE NEW NOVEL BY
JOHN VORNHOLT

War Drums
by John Vornholt
Titan Books; £3.99
ISBN 1-85286-425-7

LAST MONTH I reviewed *Sanctuary* by John Vornholt, and rated it quite highly. This month's NEXT GENERATION offering also springs from Vornholt's word processor: how does it compare?

On the arboreal world of Selva, the colonists of the New Reykjavik settlement are being attacked by a tribe of uncivilized Klingon children. Rather like the children in *Lord of the Flies*, they have developed without adult guidance, formulating their own laws, and administering their own brutal forms of justice to each other. But the humans are intruders, and the Klingons' goddess wants them exterminated …

The Enterprise crew, called in to sort the problem out, find themselves having to deal with the settlement's president, Oscaras. For all of Gene Roddenberry's vision of the future *War Drums* shows that blind racism still exists in the 24th Century, as Oscaras casts doubts on the abilities, since "half the crew isn't human". Still, as the Bajoran Ensign Ro replies, "We make do". *War Drums* deals with the crew's attempts to stop the colonists and the Klingons from destroying one another, their fight against irrational racism on both sides, while trying to expose a Romulan saboteur with their own agenda …

War Drums is every bit as good as *Sanctuary*. Ensign Ro, a character introduced in the eponymous third episode of the fifth season, may be unfamiliar to many readers: she is the antithesis of the typical, bright-as-a-button, squeaky clean crew member. Although only an ensign, she has already been court-martialled, as well as seeing her entire family wiped out by her people's arch-enemies, the Cardassians. This book assumes nothing: her background is re-introduced in full.

As an exploration of racism in the universe of STAR TREK, *War Drums* is not always successful: the ending is a touch too twee to be convincing. Perhaps the villain of the piece is made a bit too obvious, too early on. And maybe the climax of the book bears more than a passing resemblance to the fifth season episode, *Silicon Avatar*: an away team, stranded on a planet facing ecological destruction, while the Enterprise is days away on another mission; the colonists' method of surviving the disaster …

Overall, however, *War Drums* is a thought-provoking read. And, horror of horrors, it even has one scene of sexual congress between a Klingon and a Romulan. What would Gene Roddenberry make of that? **(8)**

War Drums was published by Titan on October 22nd.

The Modala Imperative
Friedman, David & Marcos

BACK to the world of comics for the second of this month's reviews. Unlike last month's *Debt of Honor*, *The Modala Imperative* is not an original graphic novel, but a trade paperback, collecting the eight comics (two four-part DC limited series) published a couple of years ago.

The book is in two parts: the first is set in the time of Kirk, Spock and McCoy, before the action leaps forward a century to the Enterprise-D and Picard's crew. Modala is a peaceful planet, almost ready for first contact. At least, that's what the Federation Council believe … Kirk and a very inexperienced Chekov, disguised as natives (a la Riker in *First Contact*), materialize on Modala, only to find the idyllic world transformed into a brutal dictatorship. And even worse — the government's control seems to stem from their use of alien weaponry.

As expected, Kirk and Chekov sow the seeds of revolt (since the Prime Directive has already been broken by the mysterious aliens), assisted (not surprisingly) by McCoy and Spock, and leave. Modala's entry into the Federation will have to wait …

A century later. Modala is now a Federated planet, and they have specifically requested the current bearer of the name Enterprise to attend the celebrations, along with any of the remaining four from the original Enterprise. As Picard escorts Admiral McCoy to Modala, another ship brings a surprise visitor to the celebrations …

Although the first part is a no-surprises STAR TREK adventure (with echoes of *Errand of Mercy*), and part two is hardly experimental, *The Modala Imperative* is the first crossover between Classic TREK and THE NEXT GENERATION (pre-dating *Unification* by a year or so), and the interplay between the two series is a delight to behold. Both Friedman and David are veteran STAR TREK book writers, and this clearly shows. Perhaps the art is a shade disappointing (the characters sometimes become at best indistinguishable, at worst, unrecognizable), but one can't help but imagine how good it would have been on screen.

Well worth a read (but whatever happened to Kirk?). **(7)**

Next month I'll be looking at Laurell K. Hamilton's *NEXT GENERATION: Nightshade*, and L A Graf's *Deathcount*. Graf wrote *Ice Trap*, about which I was less than complementary a few months ago. I'm halfway through *Death Count* at the moment, and it's not much of an improvement …

Craig Hinton

DAVID McCALLUM
JOANNA LUMLEY
Sapphire and Steel
ADVENTURE FOUR
ITC
PG

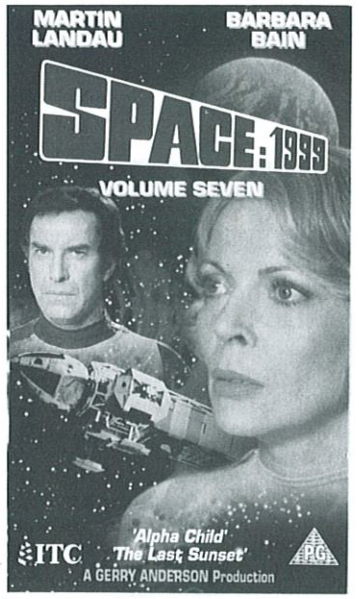
Sapphire and Steel adventure four
ITC 8123; £10.99

THIS fourth SAPPHIRE AND STEEL story ran for just four episodes so the whole story fits quite nicely on to a single cassette, instead of requiring a twin pack like the previous tapes. The fourth tale by PJ Hammond concerns an entity which has broken through into our world and taken up residence in a large town house resulting in the disappearance of two of the house's occupants, the bringing to life of Victorian children from photographs, and the arrival of trouble-shooters Sapphire and Steel.

The actual plot of this tale takes a back seat to the interaction of the two lead characters as Hammond attempts to explain some of the background and motivation behind his creations. Indeed the malevolent shape, often seen as an Edwardian gentleman with a featureless face with which the two time detectives have been sent to deal never seems that menacing. It is only Liz, a lodger played with a little too much gusto by Alyson Spiro, who is ever suspected of being in any real danger from the hostile force from outside time. This is not to say that the shape is not a nasty piece of work, indeed it has some very nasty tricks up its sleeve, but one gets the impression that to Steel and co. this is one of the run of the mill cases that they get to deal with every day.

The children that the shape brings to life from photographs add something to the atmosphere of the piece but are shown to be of no real consequence when one of them turns out to be a paper boy, literally. The basic theme of this story is the power of photography to capture people and moments of time and the dangers of mixing the old and the new. It explores the darker side of committing one's likeness to paper and perhaps gives a very good reason to be camera shy.

(7)



Space 1999 volume 7
ITC 8166 £10.99

Alpha Child is the first of the two episodes written by Christopher Penfold on this tape and follows the familiar formula of one of the Moonbase crew running amok and doing damage to other members of the crew, an unusual twist being that this Alphan is the first child to be born on the Moon since it blasted out of the Earth's orbit. Needless to say the rest of the Alphans are pleased now that they can start to replace the various crew members and guest stars which were thrown against walls, killed in Eagle crashes and generally zapped in previous episodes. Unfortunately their joy is short-lived as the new-born baby boy suddenly changes into a five-year-old child.

Koenig is unconcerned, putting the whole thing down to their strange adventures and effects of travelling through space. Thus he persuades everybody to accept the child as being perfectly normal allowing him to wander around Alpha at will. When Koenig realises that the boy is having a strange effect on the crew the child turns into the sinister forty-year-old, Jarak.

Julian Glover plays Jarak as well as can be expected in a pair of silver shorts and a wig borrowed from I CLAUDIUS. He reveals himself to be the leader of a ruthless group of renegades with very unhealthy intentions for the Moon's inhabitants. This is a standard story with few surprises but watch out for Rula Lenska as one of the Moonbase personnel. **(7)**

The Last Sunset is an incestuous story as it features only members of the regular cast. We join the crew as they are preparing to explore the planet Ariel, but just as the first manned Eagle is about to enter the planet's atmosphere it is attacked by a strange object that attaches itself to the ship. Thinking the object could be some form of bomb Koenig's first action is to bring the object into the Moonbase for examination!?! As the commander expects, the device starts to produce an unlimited amount of gas at high pressure as soon as it is examined, the result of this fine act of leadership being the destruction of several of Alpha's buildings and several members of the crew jumping into walls and throwing themselves through windows.

The first device is followed by thousands more which land on the surface of the Moon and pump out enough air to create a breathable atmosphere. Plans to evacuate Alpha are shelved and the crew prepare for life on the Moon's surface. They even install opening windows in the control room. With things changing for the better Paul Morrow and Sandra can start planning the future together, but what does the future really have in store for them?

Although a little short on plot this story has enough interesting quirks and twists to give it the pace it requires. What makes it stand out from other episodes is its lack of dependence on space aliens and possessed Alphans, although Paul does go a bit loopy towards the end of the episode.

(7)

Space 1999 volume 8
ITC 8167 £10.99

Johnny Byrne's *Force of Life* owes a great deal to Gerry Anderson's previous series U.F.O., this is due in no small part to the director, David Tomblin, who brings some of the old magic to a rather aseptic SPACE:1999. This story has the Tomblin feel to it, interesting camera angles, weird lighting and sweating guest stars. It's a real pity that Martin Landau and Barbara Bain had to be there to spoil it.

This tale centres on the possession of technician Anton Zoref by a strange blue light that passes by the Moon. Zoref, played with conviction by Ian McShane, is disturbed when he finds that he is able to fuse electric lights by going near them and is even more disturbed when the people he touches freeze to death. As his affliction gets worse he is possessed by an insatiable desire for energy. His only hope is that with the love of his wife he will be able to save himself and Moonbase.

This is the best you are going to get from this series as Tomblin manages to work within the constraints of the series and still delivers something well worth watching. **(9)**

On the other hand, this tape also contains *Guardian of Piri*, the nadir of the season. If I have ever stated that another episode was the worst of the season, I was lying. This episode isn't even worth it for the large amounts of Catherine Schell which is on display for most of the episodes.

The plot concerns an encounter between the Moon and the planet Piri which is controlled by a mechanical Guardian with the power to suspend time. The Guardian forces the Moon into orbit around Piri and an Eagle is sent down to investigate the planet. When the Eagle fails to return from its investigations the integrity of Computer is called into question. For once Clifton Jones gets a fair share of the script as computer operator David Kano as he attempts to defend the infallibility of his machine. Koenig decides to go and investigate the planet alone, on the usual grounds that as star he gets all the heroic jobs. On the planet he finds the missing Eagle crew hypnotised, unwilling to do anything but stare at the Guardian, a huge egg-shaped construction. The Guardian creates a human shaped extension of its being played by Catherine Schell who would later join the cast of the second season as Maya. This being explains to Koenig that the Guardian will lure all the people from Alpha down to the planet and then cure them of all their human imperfections, by killing them!

Although remembered by many fans of the series for Piri's surreal foliage of white balls and balloons growing from a glossy, multi-coloured floor and Catherine Schell's skimpy costume, the plot is childishly simplistic and the direction is uninspired. The most interesting thing about the episode is that the scenes set on Piri are reminiscent of *Barbarella*. Then again an empty can of Coke can look like a full one at certain angles. **(3)**

Anthony MacKay

Panopticon 92

With a number of guests, including Peter Davison, Anthony Ainley, Janet Fielding, Frazer Hines, Deborah Watling and Barry Letts, failing to appear as billed at this year's Panopticon, DWAS had a hard task ahead to pull out all the stops to compensate. **Mike Lewis** assesses how well they succeeded …

Philip Madoc, Ingrid Pitt and Terrance Dicks

Below: Nicola Bryant *photo © Claire Poyner*

Taking a seat in the Panopticon hall, I couldn't believe my eyes. Was that really Miss Vampire Lover herself swanning regally onto the stage, still as glamorous now as she was in her early seventies hey day? Ingrid Pitt. Interviewer Nick Briggs looked as excited as the rest of the audience until the one-time Countess Dracula commenced putting the bite on him, seemingly bent on embarrassing the balding wag for some inexplicable reason. Briggs rallied gamely through Ingrid's extremely vague WHO memories, as well as her lamentation over David Mellor's resignation, which won her a heckler. A clip of *Warriors of the Deep* brought the talk onto safer ground. "Was it your real hair?" the waggish Briggs wanted to know. "Look at me trying to be evil," commented Ingrid, "Vot a silly cow." Soon she was off, regaling the mind-boggled attendees with stories of her Hammer past and why she didn't mind being filmed in the buff. "Talking of sex," quipped Briggs, "here's Terrance Dicks." And there he was, larger than life indeed, and yes, he was moaning about how hard it was to write a proper novel again.

By the time Gary Russell, Peter Darvill-Evans, some bearded bloke from Silva Screen records and a rather bemused lady from Beeb Enterprises arrived on the stage, it was beginning to get unbearably hot. A combination of the absence of air conditioning and blazing lights soon had Andrew Beech resembling a well groomed lobster in his tight jacket as the interview sweltered on. Gary Russell mutilated his lower lip trying to keep a straight face, as he listened to Beech's 'coup': a proposed theme for the Green Light movie. Peter Darvill-Evans' embarrassed grin said it all. "Hit or miss?" asked Beech unwisely afterwards.

A surprise guest materialized from the mock TARDIS: Mary Tamm, luvvies. Yes, Nick, Tom Baker could be awfully intimidating to work with at times. Dahling. Luvvy.

Just before the celebrity dinner (yes, you too could watch Ingrid talk with her mouth full and kiss everybody with tomato ketchup on her chin), there was Dick Mills. He showed us a home movie of his workshop, which mostly seemed to consist of a record turntable, a few chairs and a computer printer. Zzzzz. After dinner, there was Matt Irvine and his amazing slideshow. I woke up when he waved Boris the Spider around. Pity he didn't wind him up and let him loose in the comatose audience.

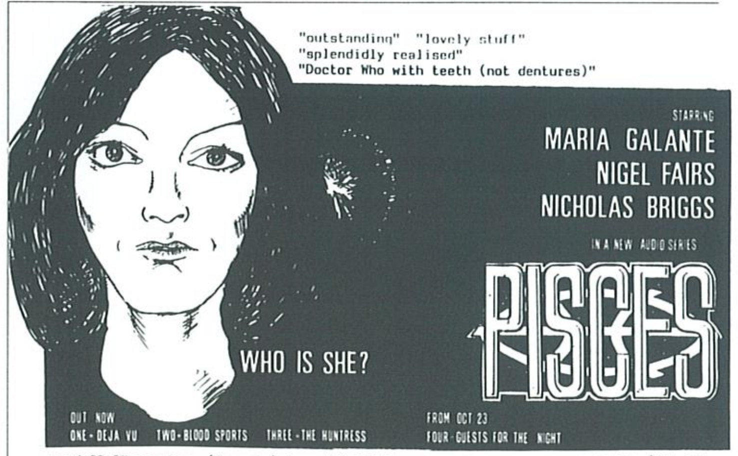
Sunday brought a revelation. So that's the bastard who bricks the public's windows up and tips their caravans into harbours: Terry (BEADLE'S ABOUT) Molloy. His henchman, Peter Nyder… er… Miles was with him, hiding under the interview couch when a particularly embarrassing clip from the *Silurians* played for all to see. John Scott Martin was there too, and he'd even managed to comb his hair. Brian Miller let him do all the talking.

I had been told to take particular note of the JNT session. Apparently he was going to respond to certain allegations in the latest *DWB*. Could be good, I drooled. However, the former producer seemed to be enjoying himself too much to entertain such matters. He positively cackled with glee as he indicated the production manager leafing through a script in the middle of *Earthshock*. So somebody had to rock the boat. "Ah, Mr Controversy," Nick Briggs eagerly greeted a question about fan hostility. JNT's happy grin curdled. "Let me just make one thing quite clear: I have not been sacked from BBC Audio." He said it twice too, just to make sure we heard him right. Someone wanted to know why he didn't recall the original cast to do voice overs on the *Shada* video. "I didn't think of that. What a good idea." My companion remarked at this point that he reminded her of Elvis Presley in his Vegas years as he continually mopped his sweating brow with a white towel. I almost expected him to toss it into the audience, and kiss a few adoring fans before disappearing offstage

Nick Briggs interviews Mary Tamm *photo © Claire Poyner*

Listening to Colin Baker makes me wonder why the hell they're sticking Jon Pertwee in the new *Carry On* film. Colin's the king of innuendo. Most of which was directed at Nicola Bryant this time around. Forgive me, but I'm sure Miss Bryant has a lot more going for her than a very large chest, but you wouldn't think so to hear Mr Baker. After a string of boob jokes, poor Nicola's stunning smile was beginning to droop just a little. Colin redeemed himself when asked what he would like to be most remembered for; "Not always being voted sixth in favourite Doctor polls," came his plaintive reply. He may not be the best Doctor, but he sure as hell is the funniest.

So, was it a good convention? This being my first Panopticon, I was a little unsure what to expect. There were no Himmleresque stewards as has been reported in the past, on the contrary, the organizers went out of their way to be helpful. The choice of guests was inspired in some cases (Ingrid Pitt), a little flat in others. Just like any other convention, really. But next time, some air conditioning, please… Apart from that, thumbs up, Caesar. **(7)**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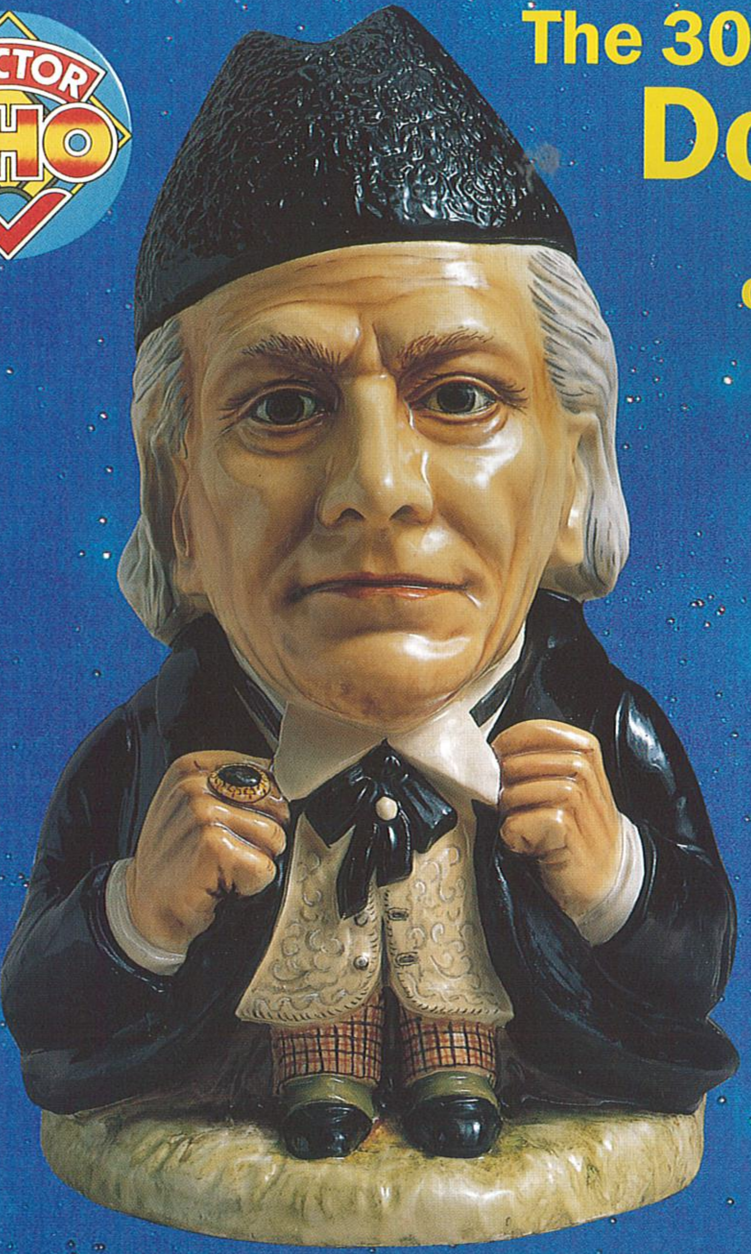

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